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THE THEORY OF GOOD AND EVIL

A TREATISE ON MORAL PHILOSOPHY

BY

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TO THE MEMORY

OF

MY TEACHERS

THOMAS HILL GREEN

AND

HENRY SIDGWICK

PREFACE

THE scope of the present work is perhaps made sufficiently obvious by the title-page. It is an attempt to deal with the chief topics usually discussed in books bearing the title 'Moral Philosophy' or 'Ethics.' It is on a rather larger scale than the books generally described as 'Textbooks,' or 'Introductions,' and is occupied to some extent with difficulties and controversies which can hardly be called 'elementary.' Still, I have in writing it had chiefly before my mind the wants of undergraduate students in Philosophy. I have endeavoured, as far as possible, to assume no previous acquaintance either with ethical or with general Philosophy: but it has not, in all parts of the work, been possible to avoid alluding to the arguments and objections of writers whose systems cannot be fully explained or examined in a book like the present. That is especially the case in Book II, which is largely occupied with replies to objections and with the criticism of views more or less opposed to my own. Even there I have endeavoured to make the drift of my argument intelligible to readers who have not read the works criticized. But those who want a short and fairly elementary treatment of the subject might perhaps read Book I by itself, or pass at once from Book I to Book III. That book deals in part with metaphysical questions which do not admit of an altogether 'popular' treatment; this section of the work would no doubt be better understood by a student who has read enough to know in a general way the meaning of the metaphysical problem, but I hope it will not be found wholly unintelligible to those who may make their first acquaintance with it in these pages. Advanced students are more likely to complain that I have touched upon many great questions, not specially belonging to the ethical branch of Philosophy, in a way which must appear unsatisfying to those who are well versed in them, and dogmatic to those who do not agree with me. I would venture

in reply to such a criticism to plead that the necessity of touching upon difficult questions without getting to the bottom of them is to some extent inseparable from any treatment of Ethics which does not form part of a complete course or system of Philosophy: and the difficulty is increased when one wishes to avoid allusiveness and technicality of a kind which would necessarily render the book perplexing and uninstructive to a student beginning the subject, or to the general reader who may take some interest in the ethical and religious aspects of Philosophy without wishing to embark upon an elaborate course of Logic, Psychology, and Metaphysic.

The idea prevails among some Philosophers that Moral Philosophy is a particularly 'easy' branch of Philosophy. I believe that it is easier than other branches of Philosophy in the sense that its more elementary problems can be discussed with less technicality, and can be understood more readily at a first reading by persons of ordinary ability and education. For this reason it seems to me a peculiarly good subject for the student of Philosophy to begin upon, although logically it might well be considered to come rather at the end than at the beginning of a philosophical course. But, though the controversies which range round the words 'Utilitarianism' and 'Intuitionism' can be understood and discussed almost without reference to metaphysical problems, the ultimate question of Moral Philosophy—the meaning and nature of the ideas 'good,' 'right,' 'duty'—is after all the ultimate question of all Philosophy, and involves all the others. I am very far from thinking that I have got to the bottom of all the difficulties involved in that fundamental problem: upon some of them I am aware that I have hardly touched in these pages. Nor is there anything very original in such a solution of them as I have been able to offer: and yet I am not aware that, in English at any rate, there is any systematic treatment of them, written from anything like my own point of view, to which I could point as altogether meeting the wants of the class of readers for whom this book is chiefly intended. Neither of the great writers to whom I feel I owe most in the special department of Ethics—the late Professor Sidgwick, and the late Professor T. H. Green whose lectures and

private classes I used to attend as an undergraduate—can well be regarded as having said the last word upon the subject by students of a generation later who have profited not merely by the criticism which each of them supplies upon the other, but by the general progress of Philosophy since the first appearance of Sidgwick's *Methods of Ethics* (1874) and of Green's *Prolegomena to Ethics* (1883). Since the last-mentioned date the supposed easiness of this branch of Philosophy, or the superior attractiveness of Logic and Metaphysic, has led perhaps to a certain unwillingness to write separate treatises on Ethics, at least among those who take what one may call a constructive view of the subject[1]. But the period—almost a quarter of a century—which has elapsed since the death of Green has been a period of great philosophical activity, and (I venture to think) of great philosophical progress, and there has been much incidental treatment of ethical questions in the works both of English and of foreign Philosophers. There seems therefore room for a fresh systematic treatment of the main problems of Moral Philosophy in what I will venture to call (in spite of great differences both of opinion and of temperament) the spirit which animated both of them.

Among more recent writers I have learned most perhaps from those from whom I differ most. I have so frequently criticized the writings of Mr. F. H. Bradley that I should like to say that, fundamentally as I dissent from his ultimate position, I believe that no one has a deeper sense than myself of personal obligation to his brilliant writings, or a deeper appreciation of the stimulus which he has given to philosophical progress, not only in his own

[1] I should wish to speak with respect of three short English textbooks—Professor Muirhead's *Elements of Ethics*, Professor Mackenzie's *Introduction to Moral Philosophy*, and Bishop d'Arcy's *Short Study of Ethics*; but none of them can be said to represent exactly my own point of view. I feel more sympathy on the purely ethical, though not on the metaphysical, side with a quite recent work—Mr. Moore's very powerful essay, *Principia Ethica*, which appeared when my own work was practically finished. Professor Paulsen's *System of Ethics* is an admirable and very attractive book, which represents on the whole a point of view not unlike my own, but it hardly touches upon many difficulties which have attracted much attention in England.

University of Oxford, but throughout the English-speaking world and beyond it. Unfortunately, Ethics seems to me precisely the side of Philosophy on which his influence has been least salutary. I trust that, while criticizing him with freedom, I have not failed in the respect that is due to perhaps the most original of contemporary thinkers.

With regard to my criticism of the able work of Professor A. E. Taylor (*The Problem of Conduct*), I should wish to explain that the recent number of the *Philosophical Review* in which he withdraws his view about the merely 'apparent' character of evil did not come into my hands till the whole of my criticism was printed and some of it had been finally passed for the press, though I had not failed to notice the change of tone already traceable in his *Elements of Metaphysics*. I can only therefore express my regret for having devoted so much space to the criticism of a position which its author has abandoned.

It is useless for an author to offer apologies for the defects of a book which he is not compelled to write. In explanation of such deficiencies of the present work as may arise from the absence of a more exhaustive knowledge of the literature bearing upon this and cognate subjects, I may, however, be allowed to plead, for the information of persons unacquainted with our English system of University teaching, that Oxford College Tutors are very far from possessing the leisure of a German or an American Professor, and that they have to choose between publishing imperfect work and not publishing at all. They may perhaps console themselves with the reflection that the method of individual teaching by means of essays and conversation gives them opportunities of appreciating the real wants of students which are hardly accessible to teachers who see their pupils only in the lecture-room. I have a strong feeling that the progress of knowledge, especially in the region of Philosophy, is often retarded by an excessive shrinking from criticism, and by an indefinite postponement of publication in the hope of more completely satisfying an author's ideal.

The following articles which have already appeared in various periodicals have been freely made use of with the kind permission of their editors:—'Professor Sidgwick's Utilitarianism'

(*Mind*, 1885); 'Dr. Martineau and the Theory of Vocation' (*Mind*, 1888); 'The Theory of Punishment' (*The International Journal of Ethics*, 1891); 'The Limits of Casuistry' (*International Journal of Ethics*, 1894); 'Justice' (*The Economic Review*, 1891, 1892); 'Can there be a Sum of Pleasures?' (*Mind*, 1899); 'The Ethics of Forgiveness' (*International Journal of Ethics*, 1900); 'The Commensurability of all Values' (*Mind*, 1902). Some of the earlier articles have been largely re-written: others are reprinted with little change.

Dr. McTaggart of Trinity College, Cambridge, has kindly read through the whole of my proofs, and I am much indebted to his criticisms and suggestions. For assistance and advice in dealing with parts of the work I am similarly indebted to Mr. C. C. J. Webb of Magdalen College, Oxford, and several other friends, nor must I omit to mention the help of my wife in the final revision.

H. RASHDALL.

The first edition was published in 1907. The second edition is in the main a reprint of the first, but certain corrections, mostly verbal, are incorporated from a copy marked by the author.

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THE THEORY OF GOOD AND EVIL

BOOK I

THE MORAL CRITERION

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

A CLEAR and adequate conception of the scope and object-matter of a Science and of its relations to other Sciences is usually arrived at only at a tolerably advanced stage in the development of the Science itself. It is impossible to start with clear conceptions of such matters as Heat, Light, Electricity, and Magnetism; for the attainment of such conceptions is precisely the goal of the Sciences which deal with these matters, and is even yet not fully reached. Science starts with some roughly defined department of common experience, and works towards clearer and more adequate conceptions of it. In the course of scientific progress, it sometimes turns out that a supposed Science deals with really non-existent objects, or is directed towards aims impossible of attainment, or that it is really identical with some Science hitherto supposed to be distinct, or is a branch of some Science the very possibility of which was previously unsuspected. Sciences fuse, subdivide, transform themselves, or disappear altogether; new Sciences make their appearance and new groupings of old Sciences. Thus the greatest service which Astrology ever rendered to the world was its own extinction: while it was only at a tolerably advanced stage of its development that the Science of Electricity was discovered to be identical with that of Magnetism, and not identical with the closely related but still distinguishable Sciences of Heat and Light. And, if that is the case even with the various departments of physical Science, each of which studies some group

or some aspect of tangible and visible things, it is pre-eminently the case with Philosophy in general and its various branches. It is only gradually that Philosophy has clearly differentiated itself from the special Sciences, and particularly from the most general of those Sciences. The older Metaphysicians were also Physicists. It is only at a comparatively recent date that Metaphysicians have abandoned the attempt to decide by the methods of Metaphysics what were really questions of empirical Natural Science, and that Physicists have ceased to dogmatize about metaphysical questions, if indeed a well-defined conception of the relation between the two spheres can be said to have been arrived at even now: while the exact relations between the various Sciences included in or closely connected with Philosophy, such as Logic, Metaphysic, and Psychology, are still avowedly matters of dispute among Philosophers.

To a certain extent every student of a Science has to go through in the course of his own studies the same process which the human mind has followed in reaching the present level of scientific attainment. In the Physical Sciences this necessity is to some extent avoided by the fact that certain results of Physical Science rapidly become matters of common knowledge or social inheritance, and so are accepted unconsciously on authority even before the age at which formal scientific teaching begins. Though the results of philosophical enquiry are far from contributing nothing to the common stock of socially transmitted ideas, they pass far more slowly and incompletely into general circulation. A teacher of Astronomy does not find it necessary to begin by refuting the hypothesis that the motions of the heavenly bodies exercise a profound influence upon the life-history of individual men. In the region of Philosophy ideas of the same order cannot always be assumed to be non-existent. The very nature and meaning of Philosophy, and still more the lines of demarcation between its various branches, must be left slowly to dawn upon the student in the course of his study of Philosophy itself. Philosophy is like learning to swim. A man does not really discover what it is until he finds himself already somewhat out of his depth. He must plunge in boldly, and discover what he has been at later on.

For these reasons I shall make no formal attempt to mark out beforehand the relation of our subject to Philosophy in general or to its other branches. I shall begin by assuming only that we are concerned with the study of human conduct, that we are investigating the meaning of the ideas 'right' and 'wrong' with the object both of arriving at a clearer conception of those ideas in general, and of determining in a more precise manner than is done by ordinary persons in common life what things in particular are right and what are wrong. How far and in what sense such an aim is attainable is one of the things which must be left to appear in the course of our enquiry. And in my treatment of the subject I shall endeavour to follow what is, not indeed always but very frequently, the line of development taken by the mind of students. When first the attempt is made to think out clearly the unanalysed, more or less confused and inconsistent ideas about human conduct with which we all start, the student is very likely to be caught by a theory of extreme simplicity and apparently great scientific completeness and attractiveness—a theory which, as a matter of fact, has always made its appearance at the beginning of every serious historical effort to grapple with the ethical problem. He is very likely to be bitten by the theory which traces all human conduct to the operation of a single motive, the desire of pleasure. If this theory be true, it follows as a matter of course that the only meaning which can be given to the term right is 'conducive to pleasure,' and to the term wrong 'unconducive to pleasure or productive of its opposite, pain.' The commonly received ideas about right and wrong, in so far as they are upon such a view capable of scientific justification at all, have then to be explained by showing that the acts commonly regarded as right are productive of pleasure on the whole to the individual, while the actions commonly accounted wrong are conducive on the whole to pain or loss of pleasure. The examination of this theory, known as psychological Hedonism, will be the starting-point of our investigation, and will occupy the next chapter. If satisfied that pleasure is not always the motive of the individual's own action, the student may still very probably be attracted by other forms of the theory that pleasure in the last resort, either to the individual

or to others, is the sole true and ultimate criterion of human action. Utilitarianism disconnected from psychological Hedonism will be the subject of our third chapter. From the Utilitarian group of ethical theories I shall turn to their extreme opposite, the theory which asserts in the most uncompromising and unanalysed way the authority, perhaps even the infallibility, of the individual Conscience and of the judgements about particular questions of right and wrong which the ordinary Conscience pronounces—the theory commonly known as Intuitionism. I shall then try to bring together the various elements of truth contained in the conflicting theories, and to arrive at a view which will embrace and harmonize them, while avoiding the mistakes and exaggerations which each, taken by itself, can be shown to involve. I shall then go on to examine more in detail some of the chief questions of right conduct, the chief commonly recognized virtues and duties or groups of duties, and to show how they can be explained and co-ordinated, with whatever correction of popular notions may turn out to be necessary, upon the basis of the theory which will be adopted.

To arrive at a clearer and more definite conception of the Moral Criterion—a clearer and more definite answer than is contained in that common moral consciousness from which we must all start to the question 'What ought I to do, and why ought I to do it?' will be the object of our first book. In the second book I shall enter at greater length into some of the current controversies connected with our subject, by the examination of which I shall hope further to elucidate and define the results arrived at in the first book. Most of these controversies may be said to centre round the question of the relation of the individual and the individual's good to society and a wider social good. I have therefore styled the book 'The Individual and the Society.' In the third book I shall deal with some of those wider philosophical issues which are ultimately involved in any attempt to think out fully and adequately the meaning of the words 'right and wrong,' 'good and evil'—in other words with the relation of Morals and Moral Philosophy to our theory of the Universe in general, to Metaphysic and Religion, to the theory of Free-will, to the facts of Evolution

and theories of Evolution, and finally to practical life. The subject of this section may be described generally as 'Man and the Universe.' In postponing these more general considerations to the end of our enquiry instead of making them our starting-point, I am once more abandoning what may perhaps be thought the logical order; and adopting the order which will, I hope, be most advantageous for purposes of exposition and dialectical defence, and which will be most convenient for those who may read this book with no previous acquaintance with technical Philosophy or with any of its branches. With regard to the relations between Metaphysic and Moral Philosophy it will be enough to premise this much—that Metaphysic is an enquiry into the ultimate nature of Reality and our knowledge of it; while Moral Philosophy is an enquiry into a particular, though very general and important, department of our knowledge, our ideas of right and wrong [1], that is to say into one particular though very fundamental aspect of Reality, the aspect which is expressed by our moral judgements. To attain some clearer conception as to the relation of these ideas to other ideas, of this aspect of Reality to other aspects, will be one object of our investigation. But, whatever answer may be given to this last problem, it must be possible at least to begin the enquiry as to what we mean by saying that an act is right or wrong, and why we call some actions right and others wrong, without presupposing any more than is presupposed in our common unscientific thinking about the world in general and man's place in it. At a very early stage of our enquiry it may, indeed, be found that we cannot give a satisfactory answer to that question without assuming particular answers to other and more general questions about human knowledge and about the ultimate nature of things—answers which from various philosophical points of view have sometimes been implicitly or explicitly denied. But I shall endeavour, for the

[1] The relation of this question to the wider question 'What is good?' will be dealt with in the sequel; but in modern times Moral Philosophy has grown out of an attempt to answer the question 'What is right?' rather than the question 'What is good?' And this is the essentially ethical question, since, by general admission, Ethics starts with the problem of human conduct, even though it may soon be discovered that that problem involves a wider problem about values in general.

reasons already indicated, to make the first part of our enquiry as purely ethical as possible. If and in so far as it shall be found that to take a particular view about the ideal of human conduct, a view to which we are led purely by the investigation of the actual contents of our ethical consciousness, logically involves us in wider conclusions as to the nature of the Universe and man's place in it, that will be the best way of defending those wider conclusions, and so of exhibiting the true relation between that ethical Science which is the subject of this book and that wider Science of Reality which will be dealt with in these pages only in so far as may be necessary for the purpose of attaining clear ideas about the meaning and end of human life.

CHAPTER II

PSYCHOLOGICAL HEDONISM

I

In the writings of Bentham[1] and his followers the ethical doctrine that actions are right or wrong according as they do or do not tend to produce maximum pleasure is founded upon the psychological theory that as a matter of fact nothing is or can be desired except pleasure. The most fundamental of all distinctions between ethical systems turns upon the attitude which they adopt towards this theory. It is of course possible for a Moral Philosopher to reject the hedonistic Psychology and still to remain a Hedonist. He may hold that it is, as a matter of psychological fact, possible to desire other things besides pleasure, but that pleasure is the only proper or rational object of desire. It is possible to contend that I may, as a matter of psychological fact, desire other things, but that, if I do so, I am a fool for my pains. (On the other hand it is clear that if nothing but pleasure *can* be desired, it is useless, and indeed meaningless, to maintain that something other than pleasure *ought* to be desired.) It will be well, therefore, to clear the ground by facing the psychological problem before we attack the ethical questions which depend, to a large extent, upon our answer to that problem.

[1] And earlier of Hobbes, with this difference—that Hobbes defines pleasure in terms of desire ('Whatsoever is the object of any man's appetite or desire, that is it which he for his part calleth good,' *Leviathan*, ch. vi), and then proceeds to define pleasure as 'the apparance or sense of good.' Bentham assumes that we already know what pleasure is, and then proceeds to argue that we desire that and nothing else. The difference might be more important than it is if Hobbes had always remembered it himself. When he identifies the 'iucundum' with 'good in effect, as the end desired,' he practically adopts the position of Bentham.

The plausibility of the doctrine that nothing but pleasure can be the object of desire depends mainly upon a confusion between three different senses in which it may be understood. The proposition that the motive of every action is pleasure may mean:—

(1) That I always do that which it gives me most pleasure *at the moment* to do;

(2) That the motive of every action is some *future* pleasure, although that future pleasure is not necessarily the most intense (it being for instance possible to choose the nearer but smaller pleasure in preference to one greater but more remote):

(3) That the motive of every act is always to get the *greatest quantum of pleasure upon the whole.*

Now the doctrine explicitly maintained by psychological Hedonists is usually the last of these three positions: while its plausibility arises chiefly from its confusion with one or both of the former. The last proposition is, indeed, one of those which would hardly obtain a moment's acceptance but for the supposed consequences of denying it. Let us assume for the moment that nothing ever is desired except pleasure, and ask whether it is always the prospect of *the greatest pleasure* that moves us. That men do not always do that which will as a matter of fact bring them most pleasure will readily be admitted: need we hesitate to assert that the world would be a much better place if they did[1]? Nor will it be denied that people often do actions which, before the time of acting, they know very well to be contrary to their real interest, understood in the most purely hedonistic sense. The drunkard—the poor drunkard at all events, who suffers from his vices in other than purely physiological ways—knows very well in the morning that he gets more pain than pleasure from his drink: he craves to get rid of the habit, and yet, as a matter of fact, he drinks on. That will be acknowledged,

[1] 'The thing to be lamented is, not that men have so great regard to their own good or interest in the present world, for they have not enough; but that they have so little to the good of others.' Bp. Butler, Preface to *Fifteen Sermons.*

but it may be urged perhaps that *at the moment of action* such a man has always persuaded himself that the drink will produce a balance of pleasure on the whole. Admit, if you like, that he has. The question remains: how, on the assumptions of psychological Hedonism, is it possible to account for such a persuasion? Granted that at the time he acts he does not know that the thing is bad for him, how can a man who once knew that a thing was bad for himself come, however momentarily, to believe the contrary? Such conduct as that of the drunkard will hardly be accounted for by mere intellectual error, mere involuntary lapse of memory. If a man who in the morning knew that to drink a whole bottle of gin was not for his good, comes in the evening to believe the contrary, his ignorance must be to some extent voluntary: he must, as we say, have 'persuaded himself' that it will do him no harm. And this voluntary ignorance, this bias in his judgement, has to be accounted for: and on the hedonistic theory (in the form in which it is now before us), it can be accounted for only in one way. On that theory there is only one desire or emotion that can ever affect the will, and so exercise a distorting influence upon the judgement, viz. desire for one's greatest pleasure on the whole. In the case supposed then desire for his greatest pleasure on the whole, steadily operating throughout the day, must somehow have changed the conviction that the man's greatest pleasure lies in abstinence or moderation into a conviction that his greatest pleasure lies in drunkenness. Is this an intelligible piece of Psychology?

Perhaps the matter may be made plainer by a slightly different illustration. If there is a certain piece of hedonistic calculus in the world, it is that the pleasure of eating something very bad for one is not worth the indigestion which it causes. The pleasure, unlike that of quantitative or qualitative errors in drinking, is slight and almost momentary: the pain may be continuous and severe. Ask a man with a delicate digestion whether the wise dyspeptic Hedonist will eat lobster salad. Ask him in the morning, ask him the moment before dinner, ask him while he is actually tasting his soup, and he will say emphatically 'No. It has almost always disagreed with me;

it certainly is not worth the risk of temporary indigestion and the danger of bringing back that chronic indigestion which it took me so long to get over a year ago.' Yet it may be that, as the dinner proceeds and conversation flows and spirits rise, the lobster salad comes round, and he eats. Now I admit that in cases like that it is scarcely possible to account for the man's action without supposing at least a momentary intellectual vacillation. Very likely he does say to himself, 'After all the consequences are not certain: I have upon occasion taken lobster salad without suffering much. I am better now than when I ate it last,' and so on. But the question remains, 'Why should he seek in this way to deceive himself?' Do not these efforts at self-deception imply that the man is not, as the theory supposes him to be, an absolutely impartial judge between the pleasure of the next moment and the pleasure of the next morning or the next week? Were he unbiassed by desire of lobster salad, or of the pleasure attending its consumption, he would unquestionably have retained his well-grounded conviction as to the inadvisability of eating it. Supposing, at the very moment before he took the fatal resolution, he were to be consulted by a no less dyspeptic neighbour, he would have no hesitation whatever about the matter. 'By no means eat lobster salad,' he would have said. And when in his own case he acts differently, it is evident that at that moment he cares more for present pleasure (in so far as his desire is really a desire for pleasure at all) than for his pleasure on the whole. There is a bias in his judgement—a bias derived from desire—which prevents him from correctly balancing present against future pains. He has, in short, other desires besides a desire for the greatest quantum of pleasure, though it may be (for anything we have seen so far) that he still cares about nothing but pleasure. At all events, the nearer pleasure exercises more attractive power than the more remote.

We have seen reason to reject the third interpretation of the hedonistic formula; now let us look at the first. It undoubtedly sounds plausible to say that, if I do a thing, I do it because it pleases me to do it; and from this it does not seem a large step to the admission that, if I prefer one alternative to another,

it is because it pleases me more, and from that to the admission that I always do that which pleases me most. It might be enough to point out that we are really misled by an ambiguity of language. 'It pleases me to do it,' 'it is my pleasure (*placet*) that it shall be done,' means merely 'I will that it should be done': as to *why* I will it, the phrase tells us nothing. But let us admit that we are justified in interpreting this 'placet' by 'It gives me at this moment more pleasure to do this than to do anything else[1].' The question still remains 'Why does this course of action give me so much momentary pleasure as to determine my will to adopt it?' It certainly cannot always be the pleasure resulting at the moment of action that moves me to do it. For the most selfish people clearly do many things which are painful at the time for the sake of some future end. Granted that it always gives me most pleasure to do what I have made up my mind to do, the question remains 'What leads me to make up my mind?' And this certainly cannot be the mere momentary pleasure involved in the act itself. If I thought only of my own momentary sensations while preparing for a bath on a very cold morning, I certainly should not take it. Still less, should I go to the dentist when my tooth is not actually aching. If I do these unpleasant things, it must be for the sake of something—a feeling of my own or otherwise—which lies beyond that moment. That brings us to the second possible sense of the psychological-hedonist doctrine—that I

[1] This seems to be very much the position of Sigwart: 'Each end must, if I am on the whole to will it and to be able to devote my powers to its attainment, be such a one that the attainment of it promises some kind or other of satisfaction (*Befriedigung*) for me, the thought of which so affects my feeling, that the expectation of its attainment affords me joy, the fear of the opposite causes me pain' (Sigwart, *Vorfragen der Ethik*, p. 5). This statement (with others in this remarkably clear and able little work) seems to me to be not actually erroneous, but to suggest the fallacies of psychological Hedonism, inasmuch as it is not made clear whether the thought of the action is now pleasant because it will produce in the agent the greatest possible maximum of pleasant feeling, or because he desires the end and *consequently* will find satisfaction in its future accomplishment and in working for its accomplishment in the present. The word 'Gefühl' seems to be used by Sigwart sometimes in the sense of 'desire,' sometimes of anticipated pleasure.

always act for the sake of *some* future pleasure[1], though not necessarily for the sake of the greatest quantum of pleasure on the whole.

Why then should one pleasure or sum of pleasures attract me more than another, apart from its being greater in amount? It may be said that I am more attracted by the nearer than by the remoter pleasure. That is intelligible, and it was admitted by Bentham, who did not see that the admission was fatal to the doctrine, implied if not expressed in the writings of himself and his followers, that what is desired is always the greatest prospective sum of pleasures. Of course in so far as remoteness involves uncertainty, that may logically be taken into account by the hedonistic calculus. But in so far as a remote pleasure is practically just as certain as a nearer one, it ought on Benthamite principles to prove equally attractive. And yet it is matter of experience that it very often does not. And this involves the admission that what I desire in such cases is not pleasure, but immediate pleasure. The pleasure in the hand is treated as if it were worth two in the bush, even when the pleasure in the bush is as certain as that in the hand.

This admission by itself makes a very large inroad into the apparently logical and coherent system of the hedonistic Psychology. Ethically it is of little importance, so long as the only characteristic which can give to one foreseen pleasure an increased attractiveness as compared with some other foreseen pleasure is supposed to be its greater proximity. But the admission may perhaps prepare the way for the recognition of the fact that there are other sources of (so to speak) differential attractiveness in pleasures besides (1) expected intensity and (2) proximity. Let us emphasize the admission that has so far been made. It is admitted, we may assume, that foreseen greater intensity of pleasure does not always carry with it greater constraining power over the will. The human mind is not the mere impartial calculating machine which it is represented to be by the hedonistic Psychology in its most logical form. We have in fact recognized the existence of *passion* in the

[1] Not of course excluding the pleasure of the immediate act which *in some cases* is obviously the prominent element.

human soul, though at present we may be disposed to interpret passion as a mere liability to be more affected by a nearer than by a remoter pleasure. But is that a possible explanation of the extraordinary motive power possessed at certain moments by one pleasure as compared with another which, upon a calm review, would be recognized as being of far greater intensity? Take the case of an angry man. On a calm review of the pleasure of avenging some trifling or imagined slight (at the cost perhaps of some serious and clearly foreseen penalty), the man himself would usually be disposed to admit that the game was not worth the candle. The pleasure, he would admit, would not be worth the sacrifice of even a week's freedom and ordinary enjoyment of life. 'Yes,' it will be said, 'but then the prospect of this pleasure is near, its more clearly perceived intensity triumphs over a chaos of remote, indefinite, and indistinctly envisaged enjoyments such as might be purchased by self-restraint.' Well, at that rate, the offer of some other pleasure more intense and equally near should at once hold back the uplifted hand, and transform the angry countenance. Once assume that the attraction lies wholly in pleasure—that the man is indifferent to the kind of pleasure, except so far as 'kind of pleasure' implies to him a difference of intensity—and this consequence must follow. But does it? The average wife-beating ruffian would probably admit on reflection that the pleasure of beating his wife on one particular occasion was not worth a pot of beer. But tender him the pot of beer when he is angry, and will the uplifted hand inevitably be lowered to grasp it? 'No,' it will be said, 'this is what he would do if he calmly reflected; but at such a moment he does not reflect; his mind is so concentrated upon that one imagined pleasure that the other fails to obtain an entrance.' But why does he not reflect? The determination to reflect or not to reflect is just as much a voluntary action as the determination to strike or not to strike. And, if the hedonistic Psychology is right, this action must be itself determined by a calculation as to the greater pleasantness of reflection or non-reflection. If then a man gets angry and so fails to reflect upon the consequences of what he is doing, that must be, it would seem,

because he has come to the conclusion that (in this particular case) non-reflection will be the pleasanter course. But what should lead him to such a conclusion? Experience? Are we then really prepared to say that a hot-tempered man is one who has been taught by experience to believe that at certain moments non-reflection upon the relative value of pleasures, necessarily involving the choice of pleasures which calm reflection would show to be of less intensity, is itself conducive to obtaining the greatest amount of pleasure or at least of immediate pleasure? If any one is really prepared to admit this analysis of passion, there is no more to be said. If he is not, he must concede that, even if we allow the object of choice to be always a pleasure, there is something which causes a man at times to prefer one pleasure rather than another, irrespective of its greater nearness or greater intensity. What is this something? I know of no better way of expressing it than to say that the man *desires* one pleasure (assuming for the moment that it really is pleasure which is desired) rather than another[1]. It is an ultimate fact that one desire is stronger than another[2]. The strength of the desire does not depend wholly upon the intensity of the imagined pleasure. And in so far as it does not depend upon such imagined intensity, it is not really a desire for pleasure *qua* pleasure. If all that is desired is pleasure—as much of it as possible, and for as long as possible—it must be a matter of indifference to the man in what form (so to speak) his pleasure is served up to him, so long as he gets enough of it. But the existence of such passions as we have alluded to is by itself a sufficient proof that it is not pleasure in general but some particular kind of pleasure that is desired in such cases. Now

[1] In so far, that is, as his impulses are sufficiently reflected upon to become desires. A large part of our habitual bodily movements are of course due to impulses which cannot be so described. The actions are voluntary only because they can be at once inhibited when any conflicting desire presents itself. Movements which are not voluntary even to this extent are not acts.

[2] Of course the cause may lie in the man's physical constitution or in external influences; but, as *ex hypothesi* we are dealing with *voluntary* actions, these causes lying outside consciousness can only influence him by producing an impulse to act within consciousness, i.e. a desire.

it seems clear that desire for a particular kind of pleasure is not really desire for pleasure and nothing else. Even if we supposed that pleasure was always part of his object, we should have to admit that the man desires not only pleasure but also a particular sort of pleasure, not necessarily thought of as more intense than other pleasures. Desire of pleasure then is not the only motive which is capable of inspiring action.

And having got so far, we may be prepared to go a step further and admit that the desire of pleasure need not really be present at all. At least there need be no desire for anything which would be a pleasure apart from the fact that it is desired. The fact that a thing is desired no doubt implies that the satisfaction of the desire will necessarily bring pleasure. There is undoubtedly pleasure in the satisfaction of all desire. But that is a very different thing from asserting that the object is desired because it is thought of as pleasant, and in proportion as it is thought of as pleasant. The hedonistic Psychology involves, according to the stock phrase, a 'hysteron-proteron'; it puts the cart before the horse. In reality, the imagined pleasantness is created by the desire, not the desire by the imagined pleasantness.

The truth is that to deny the existence of 'disinterested' desires, i. e. desires for objects other than greatest anticipated pleasure [1], destroys the possibility of accounting for nearly all our interests except those of a purely sensual character [2]. It is admitted on all hands that different people get different amounts of pleasure from the same external sources. Why so? In the case of mere physical sensation we can account for the difference between man and man by differences of physical constitution. Whether a man likes port or champagne depends upon the

[1] The phrase may also be used to mean desires for objects other than one's own *good*, however understood, but I am here arguing with those who would identify good and pleasure. It will be seen below that I regard the Psychology that is egoistic without being hedonistic as open to the same objections as the latter.

[2] Many even of these, as pointed out below, are not originally desires for pleasure, but they may be treated as such for ethical purposes in so far as the impulses or appetites are deliberately acted upon from a conviction of the pleasantness of indulgence.

constitution, as modified by education, of his palate and nervous system. It has nothing to do with the strength of any pre-existing impulse towards the one or the other. His preference is not, in any direct and immediate way, determined by his character. Apart from the anticipated pleasure, he is perfectly impartial or unbiassed in his decision between the two wines. Nothing but experience of their comparative pleasantness determines his judgement as to which of them he will take, so far as no considerations of health, or economy, or the like may dictate the choice of one rather than the other[1]. Suppose a glass of champagne to be administered to a life-long teetotaller and called a glass of lemonade. He may have been wholly innocent of a desire for champagne; he may have habitually denounced it as liquid poison; all his anticipations may have been confined to the unexhilarating lemonade. And yet, given the requisite nervous organization, he will probably exclaim, 'Why, this is the very best lemonade that I have ever tasted in the whole course of my life!' On the other hand, when we turn to moral, intellectual, or other ideal pleasures[2], we find that their attractiveness depends entirely upon their appealing to some pre-existing desire, though no doubt some accidental and undesired experience may sometimes awaken a desire not previously felt. To the mind that does not desire knowledge, knowledge is not pleasant; knowledge compulsorily admitted is often found to be productive of anything but pleasure. Benevolence does not give pleasure to people who are not benevolent. The psychological Hedonist analyses Benevolence into a liking for benevolent

[1] Of course he might be moved by curiosity to desire a wine which he had never tasted; but the pleasure which he got from gratifying his curiosity would be distinguishable from the physical pleasure of drinking. The former would be undiminished should the wine fail to commend itself to his palate.

[2] I am of course far from attempting to draw an absolute line of demarcation between the two classes of pleasure. Pursuits involving a high degree of intellectual activity may often owe some of their pleasantness to some suggestion of sensuous gratification: the desire for power may become fused with the desire for the sensual gratifications secured by power, &c., &c. And on the other hand the sensuous pleasure may be a condition of many others which are not sensuous. Coleridge, for instance, pronounced tea-drinking to be the most intellectual of sensual pleasures.

pleasure. No doubt to the benevolent man Benevolence does give pleasure, but it gives him pleasure only because he has previously desired the good of this or that person, or of mankind at large. Where there is no such desire, benevolent conduct is not found to give pleasure. And so with many bad pleasures: for it is extremely important to insist that disinterested desires are not necessarily good desires[1]. If I have set my heart upon the death of an enemy, it will give me pleasure to kill him. Apart from such a desire, there is nothing in the mere physical process which could possibly account for the pleasure. It would be no pleasure at all to kill some other person by precisely the same means, unless indeed my desire is not a desire for vengeance but a disinterested malevolence towards humanity in general[2]. In all such cases it is a certain idea which is pleasant, the idea of an object which is or may be something quite different from my own sensations, whether of a purely physical character or of any more exalted kind which a hedonistic Psychology may be able to recognize. It is not the representation of my being pleased in the future which makes the idea of the sick man relieved or of the wrong avenged pleasant to me, and so moves my will; my desire is that the actual objective result shall be achieved. Of course if I am to be influenced by such a desire, I must, as we say, 'take an interest' in the desired object. So far every desire might no doubt be called an 'interested' desire. But the

[1] The observation of this fact was Bishop Butler's most original contribution to moral Psychology. Aristotle admits that there are desires for objects other than pleasure, but he assumes that these objects are always good objects—Knowledge, Beauty, Virtue, and the like, and thus ultimately admits only two motives, desire of τὸ καλὸν and of τὸ ἡδύ.

[2] The pleasure of sheer cruelty is no doubt less purely 'ideal' than that of vengeance, and may be more correctly represented as a mere desire for a particular kind of physical excitement, which gives pleasure just like any other sensation. It may best be treated as a primitive instinct, just like the impulses commonly described as appetites—a survival in human nature of the brute, in which such an instinct was conducive to survival. But, like these appetites, cruelty of course becomes something different in a man who deliberately makes the satisfaction of the impulse his end. A beast is not capable (strictly speaking) of cruelty any more than it is capable of licentiousness. When deliberately indulged, the impulse or appetite becomes a desire.

question at issue is just this—whether I am capable of taking an interest in other things besides my own sensations, actual in the present or imagined as being enjoyed by me in the future. To deny that I am capable of taking such an interest would make it scarcely possible to explain how anything could please me except purely physical sensations, an interest in which is, so to speak, compulsory. The pleasantness may no doubt be stimulated by an effort of voluntary attention, or diminished by a voluntary effort of abstraction, which will usually take the form of voluntary attention to something else. But it does not rest with us—it does not depend upon our will, or our character, or our desires—whether we shall or shall not feel the sensations and feel them to be pleasant.

It is extremely important to insist upon the full extent of ground covered by this class of 'disinterested desires.' A prejudice is sometimes created against the doctrine of disinterested desires just on account of its ethical import. The greater part of our desires are assumed to be 'interested,' and in asserting some few of them to be 'disinterested,' we are suspected of trying to introduce questionable exceptions in the interests of edification. It is, therefore, desirable to insist that the possibility of being 'interested' in something besides our own sensations is as distinctly implied by the momentary absorption in the plot of a novel, or the most evanescent and morally indifferent sympathy with its characters, as by the most sublime heroism or the most systematic philanthropy. The spectator of a tragedy who had no 'disinterested desires' would simply exclaim, 'What is Hecuba to me, or I to Hecuba, that I should weep for her? Prove to me that my own future pleasures are somehow involved in the fate of Hecuba, and then I shall begin to be interested in her story, but not till then.' No pleasures in short are explicable on the hypothesis of psychological Hedonism except those of a purely sensual character, and I may add, aesthetic pleasures, which after all have a purely sensuous basis, however many higher intellectual activities and sympathies may be involved in them. When a beautiful landscape bursts upon us unexpectedly, the enjoyment of it is not dimmed by the fact that we were not craving for it beforehand. Nor does it appear

that a craving for beauty in general precedes or is implied in the first development of the aesthetic faculties; it is rather experience of their pleasantness which begets the love of beauty. For, although beauty is not merely a particular kind of pleasure, the pleasure is certainly an inseparable element of the beauty, and this pleasure does not seem to imply any previous desire[1]. But directly Art begins to involve anything more than the contemplation of immediately beautiful form and colour and sound[2], it interests us only by appealing to desires or interests which are not merely desires for pleasure. A man who cared about nothing but his own sensations might derive pleasure from a beautiful sunset, but he could hardly appreciate a beautiful character or a beautiful plot, and even the appreciation of physical beauty probably has its roots to some extent in a kind of sympathy, however strongly we may repudiate Hume's attempt to analyse away our appre-

[1] There is much truth in Schopenhauer's doctrine that the satisfaction afforded by Art is due (I should say, partly due) to the absorption in mere contemplation which it involves, and so in the temporary suspension of desires.

[2] And even these could not be desired unless they had previously been experienced. There would indeed be a shorter way with psychological Hedonism if we could assume with Prof. A. E. Taylor that 'an appeal to introspection will show . . . that it is impossible to have a representative image or idea of pleasure or pain' (*Problem of Conduct*, p. 113). So far as I have been able to ascertain, Prof. Taylor appears to be alone in this peculiar incapacity for imaging past pleasures and pains. The theory implies so extreme an abstraction of the *content* of the pleasant consciousness from its pleasantness that it hardly requires explicit experience to refute it. If Prof. Taylor cannot remember what the displeasure was like which it gave him to look upon his neighbour's ugly wall-paper, how can he remember even what the paper itself was like? How can he have an idea of the colour and pattern without an idea of its ugliness, and what is an idea of ugliness which does not include unpleasantness? The reason why the more acute physical pains are (fortunately) *less* capable of being represented with distinctness in imagination seems to be that, though assuredly not without content, they have (so to speak) very little content. There are comparatively few distinct kinds of qualities of pain, and still fewer have names; so that the distinction of intensity plays the chief part in our idea of them, and intensity is just the element in which imagination most fails, accurately or fully, to reproduce past sensations, though it reproduces them quite sufficiently to enable a boy to pronounce (when the difference was considerable) which of two floggings hurt most. This is of course quite a different thing from supposing (with Hume) that an 'idea' differs from an 'impression' only in liveliness.

ciation of the elegance of a swan's long neck into sympathy with its utility to the swan. Any further analysis of aesthetic pleasure would here be out of place. I merely note that the aesthetic pleasures, or an element in them, seem to be the most prominent case of pleasure, not in the ordinary sense purely sensual, which does not necessarily imply desire for anything besides the pleasure itself[1].

II

I have so far confined myself to the motives operating upon the consciousness of adult human beings at an advanced stage of development. I shall hereafter have to consider how far the facts of Evolution can throw any light upon our ethical ideas; and it is of the last importance to keep questions of psychological fact distinct from questions of psychological origin. The starting-point of any enquiry into the origin or history or explanation of our ideas, desires, motives or any other facts of consciousness must be a clear comprehension of what these facts are now in that developed human consciousness which alone is accessible to direct observation. Into questions of origin and history, therefore, I do not propose to enter now in any detail. But it is hardly possible to deal effectively with the theory of psychological Hedonism without noticing that its plausibility lies for many minds in a certain confusion between the question of origin and the question of actual present fact.

It is constantly assumed as a sort of axiom that 'Altruism' must have in some way been evolved out of Egoism; and this assumption often carries with it the further implication that in some sense Altruism is thereby shown to be Egoism after all, only more or less disguised. It is not surprising that pre-evolutionary individualists like John Stuart Mill should have supposed that primitive men and the lower animals were pure Egoists. But it is amazing to discover the same delusion more or less underlying the treatment of this subject by the very writer who, whatever may be thought of his system as a whole, has at least the merit

[1] I do not mean to imply that the value of aesthetic pleasures is to be estimated merely by their intensity, or that the desire for aesthetic pleasures (when once aroused) is merely a desire for pleasure as such.

of having been the first among Darwin's disciples to suspect that Darwinian ideas might throw important light upon many psychological and sociological phenomena[1]. If there is one thing which the Darwinian doctrine of Evolution has emphasized in the psychological region, it is the existence in animals and in primitive men of tendencies, impulses, instincts, of whose self-preserving or race-preserving efficacy they themselves are quite unconscious. We have hitherto sought our illustrations of impulses that are not mere desires of pleasure in desires which might be considered as, in a sense, above the moral or at least above the intellectual level of pleasure-seeking. It is quite equally certain that there are in animals, in primitive men, and in infants at an advanced stage of social development (to say nothing of adults), impulses that are below that level[2]. The human or other infant does not suck because experience has convinced it that sucking is a source of pleasure. It does not first suck by accident, and then repeat the action because it has found sucking pleasant, though this last discovery may no doubt aid in inducing it to suck in the right place. It sucks simply because it has an impulse to suck. The Physiologist may know why it sucks; but the child does not. The young bird does not tap the inside of its shell because it has calculated that the breaking of that shell is a condition precedent to the enjoyment of wider pleasures than are possible to it in the limited sphere of its early experiences; it taps for no other reason than that it has an impulse to tap. The beaver that has been in the habit of collecting sticks to build its habitation will go on collecting sticks when its house is ready built for it. The young elephant does not attack the aggressor because experience has convinced it that that is the best way of avoiding aggression, and the painful consequences of aggression, in the future; it attacks because it is angry. No doubt in all these cases the gratification of the impulse does in fact give

[1] The assumption is nowhere distinctly formulated, but it seems to underlie the argument of Mr. Herbert Spencer's *Psychology*, Pt. II, ch. ix, and *Data of Ethics*, ch. v *sq.*

[2] For a fuller refutation of the theory that the lower animals or primitive men or human infants act or behave on egoistic Hedonist principles the reader may be referred to the whole later part of Wundt's *Ethics* and to Prof. James's chapter on 'Instinct' in his *Principles of Psychology* (ch. xxiv.).

pleasure, or at least the resistance to the impulse would be found painful. And the experienced pleasure or relief from pain undoubtedly stimulates the animal to the continued performance of the acts. Moreover, in some cases the impulses which are now blind and unreflecting may have originally in some remote ancestor been purposeful; but the fact remains that the actual stimulus to the present act is not a mere anticipation of pleasure: the pleasure only comes because there is a pre-existing impulse. *Striving* of some kind or other is as primitive a factor in all consciousness as feeling[1]. It is quite true that normally not only is the satisfaction of the impulse itself a pleasure, but the instincts of an animal tend for the most part to prompt actions which are pleasurable on the whole. An instinct which brought immediate pain would *tend* to disappear, and an animal whose instincts on the whole did not bring it pleasure would *tend* to disappear also. But these tendencies are by no means always realized, and require to be stated with many qualifications. The moth would no doubt find it painful to resist the impulse which draws it to the candle: but still it is probable that on the whole it does not find it pleasant to be burned alive. The instinct does not tend to promote survival, and yet the moth survives.

Many of the instincts or impulses of animals are not self-preserving but race-preserving, and these are often sources of immediate pain and danger to the animal itself. The most obvious instance is the maternal instinct which often leads an animal to brave obvious pain or danger for the sake of its young. And among the higher and more gregarious animals there are often found not merely the blind impulses of anger and aggression

[1] Some Psychologists would say more primitive. But I see no advantage in attempting to identify conscious impulses with unconscious tendencies towards an end such as may exist in plants, however decidedly these may differ from merely mechanical processes. Even Mr. Spencer does recognize that race-preserving actions not conducive to the pleasure of the individual are as primitive as individual-preserving actions. That admission cuts away the ground of his assumption that individual-preserving actions are always prompted by a desire of pleasure. To identify 'cravings' with 'discomforts' which inspire a desire for their removal (*Principles of Psychology*, § 123) tends to disguise the *hysteron-proteron* of the Pleasure-psychology.

which do actually preserve individual and race alike, but instincts which lead them to face easily avoidable perils and pains in defence of the herd. How far these instincts are due to 'lapsed intelligence,' how far to natural selection, how far to direct adaptation, how far they may require the hypothesis of a final causality which resists further physiological explanation, are questions with which we are not now concerned. The only point that has here to be emphasized is that the conscious actions of infants or animals are as little explicable by the theory of psychological Hedonism as those of the hero or the saint. The impulses are not desires for a particular imagined pleasure, still less for a greatest possible quantum of pleasure upon the whole. This last aim would imply a power of reflection and abstraction wholly beyond what we have any reason to believe to be possible in an animal or even a not very primitive man. The theory of psychological Hedonism is therefore not entitled to any advantage which it might derive from presenting us with a true account of the historical origin of our present human experience. Altruism was not developed out of Egoism; though, if it were, that would not disprove the existence of Altruism now. Men and animals have always had both race-preserving and self-preserving instincts. Altruism in the developed human beings is evolved out of social and race-preserving instincts: Egoism out of self-preserving instincts. Both in their human form involve an intellectual development of which the lower animals are incapable.

The question may be raised whether these instincts or impulses which we have distinguished from 'disinterested desires' in the stricter sense do not exist even in developed humanity? They certainly exist in the human infant: do they in the adult man? The answer seems to be that these impulses do certainly exist. It is perhaps better not to follow Bishop Butler in classing hunger with such disinterested desires as Benevolence or even Vengeance [1]. Hunger is neither a desire for the pleasure of eating, nor (in its less acute forms) a desire to avoid the pains of

[1] Sidgwick follows him in this view (*Methods of Ethics*, 6th Ed., p. 45). Prof. Mackenzie seems to me right in distinguishing *appetites* from desires (*Manual of Ethics*, 4th Ed., p. 46). See also the chapter in James's *Psychology* already referred to (above, p. 21, *note*).

inanition: but it is not quite the same thing as a disinterested desire of food for food's sake. It is simply an impulse to eat. But then the human being has a power which the animal has not, or a greater power than the animal possesses, of reflecting on these impulses of his, and presenting their satisfaction to himself as an object of thought and of encouraging them or resisting them accordingly. So long as the impulse is a physically irresistible impulse, as when a man closes his eyes or ducks his head to avoid an unexpected missile, that is mere 'reflex action'; that is to say, the act is not in the moral sense of the word an act at all. The impulse is not, properly speaking, a 'motive.' But in so far as the impulse can be inhibited, in so far as the impulse is reflected on and its object deliberately conceived by the understanding and adopted by the will, the mere instinct or impulse passes into what we ordinarily call a desire, and (in so far as the desire is not merely a desire for the imagined pleasure of satisfaction) a 'disinterested desire.' And therefore from an ethical point of view the distinction between appetites and instinctive desires or 'desires of objects' becomes of comparatively little importance—of *comparatively* little importance, though it may for some purpose be important to remember that an action prompted by impulse or appetite or instinct, even where not actually involuntary, may be far less voluntary than one which flows from the conscious and deliberate desire for an object clearly presented to the mind. There are no hard and fast lines to be drawn in this matter. In the developing race and in the growing child reflex action passes by imperceptible gradations into instinctive action, and instinct into voluntary action motived by desire. So in the adult human individual there is every stage between the purely reflex action and the fully premeditated and deliberate act; but it would seem that, though there are instincts, there are here no *purely* instinctive acts in the strict sense of the word except those which are wholly involuntary. The instinct which has been reflected on and has not been inhibited, may be treated as a desire—for pleasure or some other object, as the case may be, and the resulting act is no longer in the strict sense of the word merely instinctive.

III

The course of our argument has already touched upon the question of differences in quality among pleasures. We have already seen that, even upon the assumption that what is desired is always pleasure, it is in many cases clear enough that it is not pleasure in general that is desired but some particular kind of pleasure, and we have already attempted to show that such an admission really surrenders the whole hedonistic doctrine. If people do as a matter of fact desire pleasures for other reasons than their greater intensity, it is clearly possible that the superior ethical quality or rank or dignity of the pleasure may be one of the determining factors in their choice. That this is so has often been admitted by high-minded Hedonists who have not seen how fatal is the admission to the whole doctrine that what they desire is always pleasure as such. We may take for instance the well-known passage of John Stuart Mill:—

'It is quite compatible with the principle of utility to recognise the fact, that some *kinds* of pleasure are more desirable and more valuable than others. It would be absurd that while, in estimating all other things, quality is to be considered as well as quantity, the estimation of pleasures should be supposed to depend on quantity alone.

'If I am asked, what I mean by difference of quality in pleasures, or what makes one pleasure more valuable than another, merely as a pleasure, except its being greater in amount, there is but one possible answer. Of two pleasures, if there be one to which all or almost all who have experience of both give a decided preference, irrespective of any feeling of moral obligation to prefer it, that is the more desirable pleasure. If one of the two is, by those who are competently acquainted with both, placed so far above the other that they prefer it, even though knowing it to be attended with a greater amount of discontent, and would not resign it for any amount of the other pleasure which their nature is capable of, we are justified in ascribing to the preferred enjoyment a superiority in quality, so far outweighing quantity, as to render it, in comparison, of small account[1].'

[1] *Utilitarianism*, pp. 11, 12.

Mill's psychological analysis here leaves little to be desired, but he failed to see that a desire for superior quality of pleasure is not really a desire for pleasure. If I drink a particular wine for the sake of pleasure, I of course care for the quality of the wine—its taste, bouquet, body, exhilarating properties and the like, in so far as these conduce to pleasure. But so far only. I should give it up the moment that I found a pleasanter wine at the same price and with equally hygienic properties, except in so far as occasional variety may be itself a source of pleasure. If, therefore, I care about philanthropic pleasure merely as pleasure, I should necessarily give it up and take to the pleasures of an animal if I were only satisfied of their superior pleasantness. This is just what, according to Mill, the wise man will not do: 'few human creatures would consent to be changed into any of the lower animals, for a promise of the fullest allowance of a beast's pleasures[1].' He admits therefore that such a man desires something other than pleasure. What makes him think the pleasures of the intellect superior to those of a beast is not their intensity as pleasures but their superior nobleness or moral elevation. And that is a consideration which can only appeal to a man who cares about nobleness or moral elevation.

Strictly speaking, pleasures do not differ in quality, but only in quantity. Or, to be entirely accurate, *pleasure* varies only in quantity. In ordinary language we mean by *a* pleasure a total state of consciousness which is pleasant. But no man's consciousness at any one moment can be full of pleasure and nothing else. There must be something there—a taste or a smell, a perception or a thought, an emotion or a volition—to be pleasant. A man who should for a single instant have nothing in his mind but pleasure would be an impossible variety of idiot: for this would imply that he was pleased at nothing at all. The pleasure then of this or that moment of consciousness is an abstraction; it can never exist by itself so long as pleasure is understood to mean the mere quality of pleasing. Very different *contents* of consciousness—the most purely animal sensation or the loftiest moral purpose—may have this common quality of pleasing; but, so long as they are compared merely in respect of this one

[1] l. c., p. 12.

characteristic, they can only differ in one way—in respect of the intensity or quantity of this pleasingness; the pleasure varies in degree, not in kind. All this tends to show how completely the admission of qualitative differences in pleasure abandons the hedonistic point of view. As a popular mode of expression, the doctrine that pleasures differ in kind is a true and useful formula; but it should be recognized that this is not Hedonism. For it means precisely this—that we ascribe value or worth to states of consciousness for other reasons than their pleasantness, although a certain measure of pleasantness might be a characteristic of all states of consciousness which are capable of being desired.

IV

It should be distinctly understood that the question with which we are at present concerned is a purely psychological one. It is a mere question of fact, and can only be answered by each man for himself after careful observation and analysis of what goes on in his own mind, aided by observation of what goes on in other people's minds, in so far as that is revealed by word and act. All that any writer can do towards helping another person to perform this process is (*a*) to state the question clearly and to warn him against the ambiguities of language which are the main source of error upon such subjects; (*b*) to remind him of some of the facts which the hedonistic theory has got to explain, and to ask him whether that explanation is adequate; and (*c*) to state clearly and fully the elements of truth which that theory holds in solution, and to show that a recognition of such elements of truth does not carry with it the inferences which the Hedonist draws from them. I have already attempted to perform the first of these tasks, and have made some suggestions towards the second. But before proceeding to the third, I should like to call attention to some of the more extreme cases of disinterested desire which the theory before us has got to explain away, though I have already tried to show that its failure is quite as apparent in the case of very ordinary impulses to action which are of no special significance from an ethical point of view.

The palmary instance of this failure may perhaps be found in

cases where a man labours to accomplish a result which he knows cannot be achieved till he is dead and no longer able to enjoy it. Such instances occur not only in the case of heroic self-sacrifice for a political or religious faith, or the less heroic but no less altruistic efforts of parents to provide for their children, but in the case of many desires which in the ordinary, ethical sense of the word would commonly be described as selfish enough. How is the hedonistic Psychologist to explain the vulgarest desire on the part of some recently ennobled brewer to 'found a family,' or the desire of posthumous fame—say for instance, the kind of literary vanity or ambition which has had so large a share in inspiring the life-work even of men like Hume and Gibbon? It will be urged that the man who is influenced by such motives acts as he does because the thought of being talked about after his death gives him pleasure *now*. Exactly so; the *thought* of it gives him pleasure! But that is just what the hedonistic Psychology declares to be an impossibility. According to this system nothing that is present merely in thought can give pleasure except the thought of a future pleasant state of the man's own consciousness. Being talked about after my death is not a future state of my own consciousness[1]; and therefore the thought of it can, according to the theory, give me no pleasure now. Once again we have the old hysteron-proteron—the cart before the horse. The hedonistic Psychology explains the desire by the pleasure, whereas in fact the pleasure owes its existence entirely to the desire.

The difficulty reaches its climax in the case of an atheistic martyr, who, with no belief in a future life, dies in furtherance of an object which cannot be realized till he will (according to his own view) no longer be able to enjoy it. Or, if we choose (however illogically[2]) to explain his conduct by the desire of enjoying the moments of triumph which may elapse between his

[1] In such cases we may ignore the belief in Immortality. Even where such a belief is strong and influential, it probably does not occur to a man to think of himself as hereafter enjoying the contemplation of his great-grandchildren seated on the red benches of the House of Lords, or smiling down upon his own statue in the market-place of his native town.

[2] Since this sense of triumph really implies that he is capable of looking forward with satisfaction to a result other than his own pleasure.

resolution to die and the execution of his sentence, we may put a case where this interval is non-existent. Supposing a condemned man, disbelieving in a future life, to be told that by holding up his finger just before the guillotine fell he would save the life of a dearly loved child or confer some inestimable benefit on the whole human race. On the hedonistic theory even such a minimum degree of benevolence would be a psychological impossibility. For one who knew that the act would be synchronous with the termination of his own consciousness, there would be no future consciousness the imagined pleasantness of which could possibly supply a motive for the present act. If it be contended that the moment of consciousness in which the act is performed is itself pleasant, the whole point is conceded. For it is admitted that volitions are rendered pleasant to us in contemplation, and so are called into actual being, on account of future effects other than a pleasant state of one's own consciousness. The only way of escape would be to contend that the act of lifting up a finger would have seemed pleasant to the man apart from the effects which it was to have after his death. But in normal circumstances the holding up of a finger would give no pleasure at all.

One last skulking-place of psychological Hedonism may be briefly noticed, though this represents a form of the error which rarely imposes upon any but very young students of Ethics. At a certain stage of reflection egoistic Hedonism is often made to present itself in an extremely amiable and even edifying light by including among the pains and pleasures which determine the morality of an action the pains and pleasures of Conscience. Nothing can be more beautiful, it is suggested, than to do my duty simply because I like it. There can be no more efficient sanction and guarantee of Morality than the happiness which experience shows invariably to follow in its train. I will not here examine whether the pains and pleasures of Conscience are as a matter of psychological fact so intense as Moralists have sometimes found it convenient to assume. It is probable that, as regards minor kinds of wrong-doing, in persons of average conscientiousness, the pains of Conscience have been greatly exaggerated. If moral obligation were to be based solely upon

this ground, the cynical advice to make one's moral standard as low as possible in order that one may occasionally enjoy the luxury of living up to it would have something to be said for it. But, be this as it may, be the pleasure of right-doing and the pains of wrong-doing great or small, these pleasures and pains are only explicable on the assumption of the existence now or in the past, in the man himself or in others, of desires for something besides pleasure. When the pleasure arises from the person's own purely introspective satisfaction in his own morality or victory over temptation or the like, we have simply another case of the pleasure attending the satisfaction of all desire. The attempt to explain this away is another instance of the old hysteron-proteron. In other cases there may, indeed, be no desire—at least in any conscious and explicit form—for the performance of duty or the happiness of others for its own sake in the individual himself, and yet the doing of the right act may be a source of pleasure or more probably the doing of the wrong one a source of pain. The pleasure in the act, or the pain in its omission, may be due to a habit formed under the influence of other motives. Or pleasure may have come to be associated with the act, and pain with its omission, through the influence of a public opinion which is itself based upon an approval or disapproval not arising from any hedonistic calculus, and which influences the individual quite apart from any anticipated consequences of the public feeling. To attempt to justify (on hedonistic principles) the performance of certain acts commonly called moral by their pleasantness, and then to explain their pleasantness by assuming that they are moral and so sources of conscientious pleasure or means of avoiding conscientious pain, is to argue in a circle. The pleasantness of the act is explained by its morality, and its morality is explained by its pleasantness. It is admitted that the act is often such as could not produce the attainable maximum of pleasure apart from its being regarded as moral; but, according to the hedonistic Psychology, it could never have come to be regarded as moral except through an experience which showed that apart from the opinion of its morality it was already the way to obtain the greatest maximum of pleasure. The consciousness which can take pleasure in an

action because it is right is not a consciousness that cares about nothing but pleasure. If it has not risen to the level of a disinterested love of duty, or of tribe or family or individual person, it must at least be capable of being affected by a desire of social approbation, or other social impulses and interests, which are just as difficult to account for on the hypothesis of egoistic Hedonism as the love of duty for its own sake, and which generally imply more definitely 'disinterested' desires on the part of the community by which the opinion that the act is right has been created. Even if the community is supposed to approve or disapprove merely from self-interest, the community's disapprobation would bring no loss of pleasure to a consciousness that cared not for disapprobation[1]. Moralists like Mandeville, and in a more refined way Hume, have a tendency to reduce the motive of moral conduct to a kind of vanity. But vanity is as good an instance as could be found of a disinterested desire, when it rises above the level of that gregarious instinct which is shared by the lower animals, and which after all is equally proof against the hedonistic analysis.

V

I shall now attempt, even at the risk of some repetition, to state what appear to me the elements of truth contained in the theory of psychological Hedonism, and to guard against some of the exaggerations on the other side which have sometimes helped to secure acceptance for that position.

(1) The gratification of every desire necessarily gives pleasure in actual fact, and is consequently conceived of as pleasant in idea before the desire is accomplished. That is the truth which lies at the bottom of all the exaggerations and misrepresentations of the hedonistic Psychology. The psychological Hedonist explains the martyr's death by a taste for the pleasures of martyrdom. Undoubtedly a martyr must derive pleasure from the thought of dying for a holy cause, and even in the midst of the flames the thought that he is doing something for that cause

[1] Of course, when any ulterior consequence of social approbation is to be feared, we should not speak of the person as acting from purely conscientious motives at all.

must, presumably, so long as it actually remains in his consciousness, give him some pleasure. But you cannot account for his action by that pleasure (waiving for the moment our objection to the hysteron-proteron), unless you contend that the pleasure involved in the gratification of the desire is greater in amount than the pains involved, and foreseen to be involved, in the process of achieving that gratification. The thought of the purpose accomplished or the cause assisted may no doubt, even in the moment of martyrdom, when abstracted from everything else in the man's consciousness, be pleasant; but that is a very different thing from saying that the process of being burned alive, taken as a whole, is a pleasant one, and that the man suffers martyrdom because, upon a calm and impartial review, he thinks that the pleasure will predominate over the pain. His conduct implies that the thought of serving his cause must have had some peculiar attraction for him over and above the pleasantness which it shared with the rejected attractions of a happy and tranquil existence. Had it ever occurred to him to make the calculation, a man totally indifferent to the source or moral character of his pleasures would surely have found that the pleasures of living were greater than those of martyrdom[1]. Aristotle saw this with peculiar clearness. The brave man, he tells us, finds pleasure in the exercise of courage; yet the pleasure is so small in amount, when compared with the attendant pains, that the popular mind hardly notices that there is any pleasure at all in the dying warrior's last moments. On the whole, such a death seems painful, like the experience of the athlete fighting in the arena, though there too the contemplation of the prize and the glory to be achieved are no doubt sources of pleasure[2].

[1] We may here ignore the question of the nearness of the pleasure: for experience seems to show that, even if we grant the delightfulness of looking forward to being burned alive, the prospect does not at all gain in attractiveness when one comes closer to it.

[2] *Ethic. Nicomach.* III. ix. 3 (p. 1117) Οὐ μὴν ἀλλὰ δόξειεν ἂν εἶναι τὸ κατὰ τὴν ἀνδρείαν τέλος ἡδύ, ὑπὸ τῶν κύκλῳ δ' ἀφανίζεσθαι, οἷον κἂν τοῖς γυμνικοῖς ἀγῶσι γίνεται· τοῖς γὰρ πύκταις τὸ μὲν τέλος ἡδύ, οὗ ἕνεκα, ὁ στέφανος καὶ αἱ τιμαί, τὸ δὲ τύπτεσθαι ἀλγεινόν, εἴπερ σάρκινοι, καὶ λυπηρόν, καὶ πᾶς ὁ πόνος· διὰ δὲ τὸ πολλὰ ταῦτ' εἶναι, μικρὸν ὂν τὸ οὗ ἕνεκα οὐδὲν ἡδὺ φαίνεται ἔχειν. This side

(2) It may be further admitted that this pictured pleasantness of the gratification of a desire, though it will not explain the desire, does greatly add to its strength. The pleasure of getting knowledge cannot be explained without assuming a 'disinterested' love of knowledge. But when, impelled by this desire or assisted by the co-operation of other motives, we do actually acquire some knowledge and find the process more and more delightful, the desire unquestionably becomes stronger; just as, when the anticipated pleasure turns out to be less than was expected, it may be progressively diminished. It would be difficult to say in the former case to what extent the mere love of the experienced pleasure of learning may take the place, as a motive, of all genuine desire for knowledge itself; but certainly it may do so to some extent. The scholar may degenerate into the mere bookworm. And so, on the other hand, the young boy usually begins life with some curiosity to know, but may find his love of knowledge vanish with growing experience of the painfulness of the road to it, or of the greater pleasantness of the athletics and the athletic fame which his schoolfellows, and very probably his schoolmasters, have taught him, by precept and example, to regard as the chief business of life. Here again we have a truth, ignored if not denied by modern Anti-hedonists, which was quite clearly recognized by Aristotle. It is not true, he tells us, as the Platonists maintained, that pleasure 'impedes the activities.' An alien pleasure—the pleasure connected with some other and inconsistent activity—will no doubt do that: the pleasure of eating, for instance, interferes with intellectual activity, and therefore it is when the acting is bad that the eating of sweetmeats goes on most briskly in the auditorium; when the spectators get interested in the play, they stop eating. 'But their own proper pleasure stimulates our activities and makes them better and more sustained[1].' Therefore, as he points out elsewhere, we do best what we do with pleasure.

(3) Still more must this principle be remembered when the

of Aristotle's doctrine is constantly overlooked in stating his view that the virtuous man necessarily acts with pleasure.

[1] ἡ μὲν οἰκεία ἡδονὴ ἐξακριβοῖ τὰς ἐνεργείας καὶ χρονιωτέρας καὶ βελτίους ποιεῖ, αἱ δ' ἀλλότριαι λυμαίνονται. *Ethic. Nicomach.* X. v. 5 (p. 1175 *b*).

doctrine of disinterested desires comes to be applied, as it was applied for the first time by Butler, to bad and indifferent as well as to good desires. Between the desire of an object and the desire of the pleasure arising from that object it is not possible to draw an absolutely sharp line of demarcation; the one is ever passing into and colouring the other. From the pure desire of an object for which we should be prepared to sacrifice everything, while feeling all the time that with the personal pleasure derived from it we could dispense well enough, the mind may pass by imperceptible transitions to such a desire for the pleasure as will keep alive an interest in the object entirely for its own satisfaction—a state of mind well illustrated by the familiar process of 'riding a hobby.' Although, as we have seen, the worst passions of human nature (equally with the best) are properly speaking 'disinterested,' it may be admitted that their disinterestedness is seldom as pure as that of the highest desires. For the greatest height of disinterestedness implies that the desire persists in spite of clear and calm conviction that it is not, in the hedonistic sense of the word, to one's interest, and this will seldom be the case with the worst desires. The mere victim of passion will usually (not perhaps always) 'persuade himself' that its gratification is hedonistically worth the cost. Moreover, although the man who indulges to his own loss in what we commonly call a bad passion does not act merely with a view to his own pleasure, he does act simply for the gratification of his own impulses. The outside object—the death of an enemy or the like—is no doubt desired as an end, but it is merely his own private and personal desire for it that makes it an end to him; and no doubt that desire—though not the result of a comparison between possible pleasures—is often explicable by association with other desires and impulses of a more obviously self-regarding, or a more obviously animal, character—the remembrance of an injury, instinctive jealousy, or the like. On the other hand, the self-sacrifice of the good man for the welfare of a stranger or the triumph of a cause may be produced by purely objective or rational considerations. The object appeals to or 'interests' him as a rational and reflecting intelligence, not simply as an individual being with private passions and impulses which

demand their own gratification. The bad man may be betrayed by passion into a forgetfulness of his true 'interest on the whole'; but he never wholly forgets himself and his impulses, still less does he 'lose himself' in universal or ideal interests. There is, therefore, an important psychological as well as an ethical difference between the 'disinterested' impulses of the bad man and the purely 'self-forgetful' Benevolence of the best; and between these two extremes there are of course very many degrees of 'disinterestedness[1].' If by a disinterested desire we mean the desire of an object not merely as an end which we desire, but as an end in itself which on purely objective

[1] Simmel has devoted much space (*Einleitung in die Moralwissenschaft*, 1892, I, Kap. ii) to showing how impossible it is to form any clear conception of pure Egoism or of pure Altruism: he shows how the instincts, desires, and emotions with the satisfaction of which a man identifies his own good or interest or pleasure, always include some which are of social origin and involve a moral element; whilst the most altruistic man is, after all, gratifying impulses in which he finds his own satisfaction. It seems to me true and important to say that altruistic and egoistic impulses fuse inextricably. Few desires and impulses are wholly altruistic or wholly egoistic: we can only speak of a more or less altruistic or egoistic character in them. The motives which prompt the average man to devote himself heartily to his profession can as little be represented as pure desire for the public good as they can be represented as merely a desire for his own enjoyment or advancement. His profession has become to him an end-in-itself, but it has become so because he has both interests which are mainly egoistic and impulses which are mainly altruistic. At the same time, I do not think we can deny the psychological possibility of the pure Egoist who deliberately gratifies his impulses just so far as he thinks they will yield him pleasure on the whole; this possibility is not affected by the social *origin* or the social *tendency* of some of those impulses. The pure Altruist who subordinates his own interest entirely to that of others is more difficult to conceive, because the man's very Altruism must produce such an identification of his own interest with that of others that they can hardly be kept absolutely apart in consciousness, except in those cases where there is some absolute and palpable contradiction between the interest of others and what would, but for his Altruism, be conceived of as his own interest. But where the sacrifice of life, or of all that makes life worth living, is deliberately made, the fact that on reflection the man may recognize the sacrifice as a good for him does not make it impossible to describe the desire as such as altruistic, so long as the object is not desired merely as a means to his own good, whether conceived of as pleasure or something else. What is true in Simmel's contention is that the normal motives of most men are neither purely altruistic nor purely egoistic.

grounds we conceive of as good, then we must pronounce that such a disinterested desire is possible only in the case of good desires. Bad desires and inclinations may be 'disinterested' in the merely negative sense that they are not desires for pleasure as such. Desires for the good of another person or persons are more 'disinterested' in a stricter sense and a higher degree: while the highest degree of disinterestedness is only reached when a moral or universal element enters into the desired object, when the individual desires the object not merely as a particular individual who chances to have such and such an impulse, but as a reasonable being who aims at what his Reason tells him to be not merely *his* good, but part of *the* good.

(4) It has been implied in what has been said already that pleasure, though not the only object of desire, is nevertheless one possible object of desire, and that desire of pleasure, though incompetent by itself to explain the most ordinary springs of action, is widely operative in human life. If this is not often explicitly denied, there are many Moralists who in their zeal against pleasure seem disposed to ignore or gloss it over. Butler, for instance, appears to ignore entirely the existence of any general desire for pleasure as distinct from (*a*) particular 'propensions,' or affections, or disinterested desires for objects, and (*b*) the desire for one's 'interest' on the whole. Whether or not he is right in holding that hunger is a disinterested desire for food, hunger is clearly distinguishable from the desire for gastronomic pleasure. When a City Alderman after satisfying his hunger goes on grossly to over-feed himself, he is surely impelled by a love of pleasure which is as distinct from the passion of hunger as it is from a rational affection towards his own interest on the whole. Indeed, the calculating desire for one's interest on the whole, if 'interest' be understood in the hedonistic sense, is only explicable as the result, in the developed and reflective consciousness, of the desire for present and immediate pleasure. The idea of pleasure on the whole is got by abstraction from a number of particular pleasures each of which the man desires, but which experience shows him cannot be enjoyed all at once.

(5) If modern Anti-hedonists have not explicitly explained

away all desire for pleasure, some of them have categorically and in terms denied the possibility of desiring a 'greatest quantum of pleasure' or a 'sum of pleasures'. The possibility of desiring a sum of pleasures was denied by the late Prof. T. H. Green, but it is difficult to see on what grounds except the obvious but irrelevant fact that pleasures cannot be enjoyed as a sum [1]. Such arguments are surely based upon a mere verbal quibble. You might as well deny that I can desire music because I cannot take in a whole symphony simultaneously, while each separate note, taken by itself, would not be music at all. When I say that I desire a sum of pleasures, I mean of course that I desire to get as much pleasure as possible, i. e. to enjoy pleasure as intense and as lasting as possible. Such an aim seems to me perfectly intelligible and rational as far as it goes. How far such a formulation of the ethical criterion falls short of the real demands of the moral consciousness, we shall have to consider hereafter. It is enough here to say that it is not in my view possible to oppose a hedonistic Ethic on the ground that its end is an impossible or unattainable one, or the hedonistic Psychology on the ground that the motive which it represents as the sole motive of human conduct is an impossible or non-existent motive. The question is, however, of so much importance that I reserve a more full discussion of it for a separate chapter [2].

(6) And here perhaps it may be well to meet an objection which turns upon what is often called the 'paradox of Hedonism.' 'If you aim at pleasure you will not get it,' it is said. 'To get pleasure forget it.' Within certain limits, I quite admit the truth of the experience alleged. It is no doubt a serious argument against the adoption of the hedonistic calculus as our *sole* guide in personal conduct. But to a certain extent it is possible to allow for this fact of experience even in the hedonistic calculus itself. I do not find that I fail to enjoy a holiday because I have carefully considered which of various tours, equally expensive or inexpensive and equally recuperative [3], I should enjoy most,

[1] Cf. Sidgwick, *Methods of Ethics*, 6th ed., p. 134. [2] Book II, ch. i.

[3] Even this could not be decided without taking into consideration the pleasure I should get. The hedonistic calculus is as necessary for duty as for pleasure. If the doctrine that pleasure cannot be obtained by contrivance

I should no doubt begin to lose pleasure, if I were always calculating whether the enjoyment had realized my expectations. But, subject to this consideration, I do not believe that in small matters—supposing the pursuit of pleasure to be strictly limited by considerations of duty, so that no latent uneasiness of conscience cleaves to our enjoyment—the alleged paradox holds good at all. It is not a matter of experience that pleasure is diminished by being provided and contrived for beforehand[1]. I do not find that the dinner which I have ordered myself always gives me less pleasure than the dinner which has been ordered by somebody else. In certain circumstances the previous contrivance may even become a positive enhancement of the delight; as when Charles Lamb complained that in his days of comparative affluence he could not get the pleasure out of his theatre-goings and occasional holiday-makings which he did when they had to be anxiously planned and contrived for weeks beforehand[2].

VI

Before leaving the subject of pleasure I think it desirable to add a further explanation. It is possible to reject the hedonistic Psychology without admitting the existence of disinterested desires in the strictest sense of the word. Until recently the existence of disinterested desires was usually denied (among modern Philosophers) only by Hedonists. The late Professor Green agreed with Professor Sidgwick in accepting unreservedly

were true, a Physician would have carefully to conceal from his overworked or overworried patient the fact that the tonic he was recommending was simply a dose of pleasure. This may possibly at times be desirable, but not in the case of persons who have no rooted antipathy to pleasure.

[1] Not only does not the calculation always diminish the pleasure, but a further pleasure may arise from the satisfaction of the desire for pleasurable life in general, as has been well pointed out by von Hartmann, who is assuredly no Hedonist ('eine zweite reflektierte Lust aus der Befriedigung des eudämonistischen Wollens,' *Ethische Studien*, p. 137). At the same time he seems to me mistaken, if not inconsistent, in maintaining that all pleasure arises from the satisfaction of some desire ('dass es keine Lust giebt, die nicht an die Befriedigung eines Begehrens geknüpft wäre,' l. c., p. 143), though he admits that the desire may sometimes be set up by the mere presence of the means to its satisfaction.

[2] 'Old China' in *The Last Essays of Elia*.

Butler's quite explicit doctrine on this head. At the same time we find in Professor Green's writings, side by side with this view, another which seems to be scarcely consistent with it. He commits himself at times to the doctrine that in every action 'self-satisfaction is sought[1].' His theory of the 'timeless self' no doubt makes it difficult to say in what relation this doctrine of self-satisfaction is supposed to stand to the belief in 'disinterested desires.' Desires are certainly in time, and the object of desire must be conceived of as future. It is, therefore, not easy to see how the satisfaction of a self which is not in time can be made into a motive for conduct, or how we can at a definite moment of time introduce a change into that which is timeless. Here (as so often with theories of this kind) it is difficult not to suspect some confusion between the permanent and the timeless. But, waiving that difficulty, I can only understand the idea of 'aiming at self-satisfaction' to mean that my motive is a certain future state of my own consciousness. If I am always aiming at a future state of my own consciousness, I cannot be 'disinterestedly' pursuing the advancement of learning or the good of my neighbour. In that case I should care about my neighbour's good merely as a means to my own 'satisfaction.' The two doctrines are antagonistic and inconsistent. Recent writers of Professor Green's School appear to have recognized the fact, and have explicitly adopted the doctrine of 'self-satisfaction.' They are Egoists without being Hedonists. They admit that every action is properly speaking 'interested,' though my interest is not equivalent to my maximum pleasure. Such a doctrine seems to be no less false psychologically, and ethically scarcely less objectionable, than the hedonistic Psychology itself[2].

Of course there is a sense in which every action is 'interested.' I cannot care for anything—my neighbour's good, the cause

[1] *Prolegomena to Ethics*, Book II, ch. ii, and Book III, ch. i.

[2] 'The same analysis which shows me that I do not always aim at my own pleasure, shows me equally that I do not always aim at my own satisfaction. I reject, in the one case as in the other, the conscious egoism of the form in which human choice is conceived—except in the insignificant sense that I am conscious that what I desire and aim at is desired and aimed at by me—a tautological proposition' (Sidgwick, *Ethics of T. H. Green, Mr. Herbert Spencer, and J. Martineau*, p. 103).

of 'learning' or of 'sport' or whatever it may be—unless it interests me. But this has, I suppose, never been denied. It simply amounts to saying that a desire which is to move me must be *my* desire. The question, as I conceive it, is whether the motive of every action is some future state of my own consciousness, or whether it may be some state of some other's consciousness, or some event in the objective world[1]. To assert the former view would amount, as it appears to me, to saying that a man cannot be benevolent simply because he cares about his neighbour for that neighbour's sake, but only because he wants to be a person conscious of his own benevolence. His neighbour's good is regarded not as an end but only as a means —a means to some state of his own soul, however 'spiritual' or exalted that state may be supposed to be. Now such a doctrine seems to be simply a recrudescence of the old 'soul-saving' view of life, which may so easily degenerate into something considerably more nauseous and offensive than an honest egoistic Hedonism which is naked and not ashamed. But the question with which we are now concerned is whether the doctrine is psychologically true. To my own mind it seems open to precisely the same line of objection which its supporters raise in arguing against Hedonism. It involves the same hysteron-proteron. It makes the anticipated 'satisfaction' the condition of the desire, whereas the desire is really the condition of the satisfaction. If I cannot by any possibility be moved by my neighbour's calamity until I have satisfied myself that I shall get myself into a state of desirable moral exaltation by doing so, you cut away all possibility of explaining why such a state should be looked at as desirable or morally exalted. Unless I looked upon my neighbour's good as a thing for which I cared, or which possessed intrinsic value apart from any effect upon me, I should not think it a good state of mind for me to contribute or to have contributed to that good. It is precisely the unselfish-

[1] Of course, if such an event is to have real value, it must ultimately have some effect on some consciousness or other, but this need not be distinctly contemplated by the agent. A Samson might well desire the destruction of his enemies and their temple, even at the cost of his own life, without distinctly thinking of the satisfaction to be given to his surviving countrymen.

ness of the action which I find good. If I cared for my neighbour's welfare merely as a means to my own edification, I should not be unselfish. In many cases I cannot doubt that such acts are done entirely without the thought of self, or even of abstract duty: the desire of the other man's good acts as directly and immediately upon the will as the desire of one's own: while, so far as a reflective idea of goodness or duty enters into the motive, the very essence of that ideal of moral goodness or duty for its own sake is precisely this—that the thing should be done simply because Reason approves it, and without calculation as to how it will affect our own future consciousness.

The immediacy with which the conception that a thing is rational acts on the will is best seen perhaps in cases where no very important moral interest is at stake. A man with a taste for 'Bradshaw' sees that certain trains are arranged badly and stupidly. He feels a disinterested aversion to such an irrational arrangement. He proceeds anonymously to write to the papers or to the Company's Traffic Manager. No reputation is to be got by the step, and he never expects to travel that way again. As little is he thinking of any future glow of self-satisfaction or of the improvement of his own character. The mere fact of the thing being irrational and as it should not be is a sufficient reason to a rational being for wanting to put it right. If you say he is 'uneasy' at the thing being wrong and it is the uneasiness that moves him, you are of course falling once again into the hysteron-proteron in the form in which it got hold of Locke[1]. You are explaining the desire (and consequent action) by the uneasiness, whereas it is really the desire that explains and occasions the uneasiness.

No doubt it may be freely admitted that when once an object is looked upon as good, as a thing that interests us, the desire to

[1] *Essay*, Book II, ch. xxi, § 40. In so far as Locke actually identifies (as he shows a tendency to do) the 'desire' and the 'uneasiness' he is not open to this criticism, and in fact no one shows more convincingly that it is not 'the greater good, though apprehended to be so' (ib., § 35), which always determines the will; but in so far as he makes the motive to be 'the removing of pain . . . as the first and necessary step towards happiness'—'that happiness which we all aim at in all our actions' (ib., § 36)—he is virtually under the influence of the hedonistic Psychology.

attain for ourselves the moral good implied in the promotion of that object supplements, and fuses itself with, the desire that the object should be attained. Just as experience of the pleasure of satisfying a desire reacts upon and reinforces the desire itself, so with those highest desires which consist in devotion to some ideal aim or some form of other people's good the aspiration after goodness for ourselves mingles with and reinforces the desire that others should be benefited or the ideal aim promoted: the desire to *be* good and the desire to *do* good blend into one. The proportion in which the desire for personal holiness on the one hand, and the desire for the promotion of objective interests on the other, enter into the motives of the best lives probably varies enormously even in the noblest characters. And from a practical point of view it is probably desirable that both elements should be present. The man who is only interested in people and causes is apt to be indifferent to aspects and departments of Morality which are really of great social importance; while the man who thinks only of his own spiritual condition is apt to become unhealthily introspective, if not anti-social. Both types of character are one-sided; but, if we had to choose between the two, it is hardly to the man who most consciously and deliberately regards his family and his neighbours, the poor and the unfortunate, as the means to his own spiritual advancement, or as supplying occasions for the acquisition of 'merit,' that we should accord the preference. Some of the ethical questions on which we have here touched will demand our attention again. Meanwhile, I content myself with repeating that, as a pure matter of Psychology, the theory that every desire is a desire 'for some form of personal good[1]' is open to every objection which its exponents have so

[1] A few expressions of the doctrine here criticized may be given. Mr. Fairbrother is quite justified in making Green hold (*The Philosophy of T. H. Green*, p. 67) that the end 'is always a "personal good" in some form.... Man always is actuated by this conception of himself as satisfied'; but he ignores all the passages that have an opposite tendency. The Bishop of Clogher (Dr. d'Arcy) introduces another feature into the doctrine—that 'the end of a desire is not an external thing, but the corresponding activity' (*Short Study of Ethics*, 2nd ed., p. 158). Somewhat similar, though more vague, is Mr. Bradley's earlier doctrine that 'nothing is desired except that which is identified with ourselves, and we can aim at nothing, except in so far as we aim at ourselves in it' (*Ethical Studies*, p. 62). Professor Muirhead likewise contends that

convincingly urged against the hedonistic Psychology. The satisfaction of altruistic and other higher desires only comes to be regarded as 'our good' because we care for a good which originally presents itself as a good which is not ours.

'It is only as involved in one's own that one can desire one's neighbour's good: it is only as his good enters into *my* conception of *my* good that I can make it an object of desire and of volition' (*The Elements of Ethics*, p. 154). And again, 'The essential point to note is that all desire, and therefore all will (inasmuch as will depends upon desire), carry with them a reference to self. Their object is a form of self-satisfaction' (ib., p. 50). 'Reference to self' is vague, but appears to be explained by the previous sentence: 'They [the objects of desire] are related to the self, in that it is the realization of them *for a self* that is desired.' Still there is a vagueness which I should like to see cleared up. Does 'for a self' mean (1) that the desire is mine, or (2) that it is my interest in some future state of myself that makes me care to pull my neighbour's child out of the fire? The first doctrine seems to be as unquestionable as it is unquestioned; the latter false. On p. 47 we seem to get an explicit statement that it is always a future state of the self that is desired in the words: 'Desire is a state of tension created by the contrast between the present state of the self and the idea of a future state not yet realised.' Is not this 'tension' very much like Locke's 'greatest present uneasiness,' with the disadvantage of introducing a not very intelligible physical metaphor? I should say that in the case of the anonymous railway reformer contemplated in the text the tension is caused solely by the contrast between the present state of the time-table and the ideal which his reason unfolds to him. If so, the object of his desire, the object for which he cares, is not 'self-satisfaction.' Whatever be the meaning of his earlier and vaguer utterances, I rejoice to find that Mr. Bradley does now repudiate the doctrine which I am attacking. 'It is not true that in volition the idea is always the idea that *I* am about to do something. I cannot admit that the qualification of the change as my act must always in volition form a part of the idea's original content' (*Mind*, N. S., No. 44, 1902, p. 456). It is true that Mr. Bradley is speaking of Will, and in his view 'desire is most certainly not necessary for will' (ib., p. 457), but he elsewhere declares still more clearly that we can desire 'an event outside and quite apart from our psychical existence' (*Mind*, N. S., No. 41, 1902, p. 18). That is exactly the point on which I wish to insist, but it seems to me quite inconsistent with Mr. Bradley's doctrine that the bad man acting (as ordinary people would put it) against knowledge 'is pursuing still and he always must pursue his own good' (*Mind*, N. S., No. 43, 1902, p. 307), and with the whole tendency of that article. Surely 'my good' is not 'an event outside and quite apart from our psychical existence.' Mr. Bradley might reply that to 'desire' and to 'will' are not the same thing, but if a desire (not opposed by some other desire of sufficient strength) does not pass into action, have we not the 'freak of unmotived willing' against which Mr. Bradley very properly protests?

CHAPTER III

RATIONALISTIC UTILITARIANISM

I.

In the last chapter an attempt was made to show that as a matter of psychological fact human nature is capable of desiring other things besides pleasure. To show that something besides pleasure is capable of being desired does not, however, prove that anything besides pleasure is ultimately desirable. It is still quite possible to maintain that pleasure is the only true or rational object of desire. The question remains whether this is actually the case. There are undoubtedly people who on reflection are prepared to declare that they can attach no ultimate value to anything besides pleasure. They may recognize the existence of 'disinterested desires' for knowledge or for power, for wealth or for vengeance, but on reflection it appears to them rational to gratify these desires only in so far as they tend to swell the sum of pleasure—which means, as we have seen, to get as much pleasure as they can for as long as they can. The wise man (it is suggested) will treat the attainment of all other objects as means, not as ends. Other desires will be, so far as possible, gratified or repressed, stimulated or discouraged or transformed in whatever way experience shows to be on the whole conducive to getting as much pleasure out of life as possible.

Now so long as the egoistic Hedonist confines himself to asserting 'I care nothing about anything but my own pleasure, and I propose to gratify my other impulses only in so far as (in the long run) I think it tends to procure for me a maximum yield of pleasure on the whole,' he is inaccessible to logical attack. But very often he does not stop at that. He declares not merely that pleasure is *his* object, but that pleasure is the only reasonable object of desire, that every reasonable man must agree with him

in thinking that his own pleasure is to each man the only proper object of pursuit, that any one who pursues any other aim is unreasonable, and makes a mistake. And when that attitude is adopted, it becomes possible to urge that he is implicitly appealing to a universal standard which must be the same for all men. He admits that Reason can pronounce upon the value of *ends*, and that it does so, not from any merely private point of view, but from an objective or universal standpoint. The pursuit of pleasure is approved not merely because it chances to be the end that he prefers, but because in some sense it is the *true* end, the end that ought to be pursued. The champion of pleasure may, indeed, contend that the universal rule which Reason approves, is not that pleasure in general ought to be pursued, but that each man should pursue his own pleasure. But an egoistic Hedonist of this type is liable to be asked on what grounds an impartial or impersonal Reason should take up this position. He may be asked whether, when he condemns the pursuit of ends other than pleasure, he does not imply that the claims of this end are dependent, not upon the individual's chance likings, but upon something in pleasure itself, something which Reason discerns in it, and which every Reason that really is Reason must likewise discern in it. And if that is so, he may further be asked why Reason should attach more importance to one man's pleasure than to another's. If it is pleasure that is the end, it cannot matter, it may be urged, whose pleasure it is that is promoted. The greater pleasure must always be preferable to the less pleasure, even though the promotion of the greatest pleasure on the whole should demand that this or that individual should sacrifice some of his private pleasure. From this point of view it will seem impossible that Reason should approve the universal rule that each should pursue his private pleasure even if a loss of pleasure on the whole is involved. The rational rule of conduct will appear to be that each individual should aim at the greatest pleasure on the whole, and that when a greater pleasure for the whole can be procured by the sacrifice of an individual's private pleasure, the sacrifice should be made. The Egoist's appeal to Reason, the setting up of Egoism as an objectively rational rule of conduct, the

condemnation as irrational of those who pursue any other end, seems therefore to react against his own position. The logic of the egoistic Hedonist's position carries him away from egoistic Hedonism and forces him into the adoption of a universalistic Hedonism.

Whatever may be thought of the line of argument which thus attempts to cross the gulf between egoistic and universalistic Hedonism, it is at all events one which has been actually followed more or less consciously and explicitly by many minds. There are many persons who remain Hedonists, who are prepared to declare that all other objects except pleasure should be pursued only in so far as they yield pleasure on the whole, but who are not prepared to say that it is only their private pleasure which should be pursued. Among these desires for objects other than pleasure of which they are conscious, there is one which does present itself to them in a different light from those other impulses which they are prepared to subordinate entirely to the pursuit of private pleasure, and that is the desire for other people's pleasure. For the very principle upon which their own preference of pleasure to all other objects of desire rests, seems to put them under the necessity of approving a similar end for other people. How then can they condemn in themselves an impulse which tends towards the realization of that end for others? To do so would seem to involve inconsistency or self-contradiction. There is of course no contradiction in the mere existence of inconsistent desires in different persons. There is no contradiction in admitting, as a fact, that I may want what my neighbour wants too, and we cannot both enjoy. But it is otherwise when it is a question of approving inconsistent desires. Reason cannot give different answers to the same question. It may of course appear to do so: we may all make mistakes, but when we do so, we acknowledge that it is not really Reason which pronounces. If the Reason of two men tells them opposite things, we necessarily conclude that one of them at least must be wrong. Hence when occasions arise, on which what increases pleasure for me diminishes it for some one else, it is impossible that each can be right in judging his own pleasure to be the more important. By such

a line of thought, the Hedonist who bases his position upon Reason is driven to recognize that the greatest pleasure on the whole is from the point of view of Reason the most important end, no matter whether it is I or some other 'I' that is to enjoy that pleasure. No doubt this bare intellectual recognition of its reasonableness does not by itself lead to altruistic conduct except where there is either (1) a disinterested desire of other people's well-being (whether of certain definite individuals or of humanity at large) or (2) what Professor Sidgwick has called a 'desire to do what is right and reasonable as such.' In the first case, Reason will prevent a man, so to speak, inhibiting his spontaneous benevolent impulses, as he (more or less frequently) inhibits other impulses when they are shown not to be conducive to his own interest on the whole; in the second case, the reasonableness of the conduct will actually become the motive for its being done, even though (apart from the verdict of Reason) there should be no spontaneous inclination towards the conduct which it prescribes. In this way it is possible for a mind which starts with a conviction of the intrinsic reasonableness of the pursuit of pleasure to feel itself compelled to admit, not only the abstract reasonableness of unselfish conduct, but also the existence of something within us which sanctions, prescribes, dictates, a certain course of conduct quite irrespectively of the individual's interest—in other words to admit the existence, and the authority of what is popularly called Conscience, or the 'duty' which Conscience prescribes—of what in more technical language is styled the Practical Reason or of the categorical imperative which that Reason enacts.

Or if to some minds this language about Reason and imperatives carries with it associations which seem to lead them beyond the point which they have really conceded, we may put the matter in a slightly different way. Every one who ever thinks about conduct at all, who regards the choice of an end as a matter upon which thinking has got anything to say, every one who attempts to represent his conduct as capable of rational justification, gives judgements of value. The egoistic Hedonist who says not merely 'I like pleasure and therefore

I intend to pursue it,' but 'the wise man is he who pursues pleasure,' shows that he has this ultimate and unanalysable idea of good or value in his mind as much as the idealizing moralist who says 'Virtue is the true end of human pursuit.' Even though 'that which has value' may be to him coextensive with pleasure, the term 'value' or 'good' does not *mean* merely the same as pleasure. The proposition 'my pleasure is good' is not to him a mere tautology. It does not mean merely 'pleasure is pleasant.' Still more obviously is this the case when such a Hedonist recognizes, as I have contended that he is logically bound to recognize, that it is not only *his* pleasure which has value but all pleasure; and that therefore it is rational for him to pursue his neighbour's pleasure as well as his own, and to prefer the larger amount of pleasure to the smaller, even though the larger pleasure be the pleasure of others, and the smaller his own.

After such an admission has been made, the enquirer may still take a utilitarian view of the moral criterion: he may still hold that we find out what it is reasonable to do by asking experience to decide what promotes the greatest happiness on the whole or (less logically) the 'greatest happiness of the greatest number': but he is no longer a Utilitarian in his view of the ultimate reason for doing what is thus ascertained to be right. In admitting that one course of conduct is rational, another irrational, irrespectively of the individual's 'interest,' he has admitted in effect that one thing is right, another wrong; he has admitted that the difference between right and wrong is perceived (in a sense) *a priori*[1], and not by experience; he has admitted the existence of an 'ought' and an 'ought not,' however much he must still protest against what he may be disposed to regard as the mystical character with which the idea of 'ought' or 'duty' or 'moral obligation' has been invested by the traditional schools of anti-utilitarian or 'intuitional' or 'transcendental' Ethics.

[1] This assertion will subsequently be explained and qualified (see below, p. 112, 148, *et passim*).

II

Of the writers who have been led by some such line of thought to attempt the combination of a rationalistic view of the ultimate basis of Ethics with a purely hedonistic criterion of conduct, by far the most important and the most distinguished is the late Professor Henry Sidgwick. To examine the system of 'rationalistic Utilitarianism' with which his writings present us, will be perhaps the best way at once of exhibiting in further detail the argument which has been outlined, and of criticizing the attempt to stop exactly at this point in the dialectic which leads away from Utilitarianism towards what I may be excused for calling by anticipation a higher and deeper Moral Philosophy.

Professor Sidgwick's position in the development of English Utilitarianism may be indicated by saying that he takes up the controversy at the point at which it had been left by Mill. Of John Stuart Mill's attempt to reconcile a theoretical acceptance of the hedonistic Psychology with the practical recognition of an enthusiastic 'Altruism,' and even of a 'disinterested love of Virtue,' almost enough has been said in the last chapter. His expedient is to introduce into the hedonistic calculus differences of kind irresolvable into differences of degree. We have already seen that the desire of a higher pleasure is not really a desire of pleasure: what makes one pleasure 'higher' than another must be something other than its pleasingness. Moreover, when Mill recognizes the possibility of desire for pleasure passing by association into a 'disinterested love of Virtue for its own sake,' even were we to accept the paradoxical allegation that Virtue and pleasure have been invariably associated in our experience, we should still be confronted with the admission that as an actual fact it is possible for me *now* to desire something besides my own pleasure, however I may have come to desire it. Mill's own non-recognition of this consequence was due no doubt to the well-known fallacy of 'mental chemistry'—of supposing that mental states contain within them unaltered the states out of which they may have grown, as a chemical

compound still continues to have in it its component elements [1]. But, even were his account of disinterested love of Virtue psychologically tenable, it might still be pointed out that the tendency of Mill's theory is to place the Saint's love of Virtue precisely on a level with the miser's love of money [2]. Granted that both may be accounted for by association, the discovery of the association tends to its own dissolution. When the miser discovers that money is a means and not an end, he will, if he is sensible, cease to love money for its own sake. When the Saint, instructed by the Philosopher, discovers that pleasure is the end and Virtue only the means, he must, one would suppose, cease to desire Virtue for its own sake and cultivate pleasure instead. The more rational he is, the more irrational will he deem it to confuse means with ends. Association of ideas is after all, in such a connexion, only another name for confusion of thought. An ethical system which is based upon confusion of thought surely rests upon a precarious foundation.

Professor Sidgwick [3] completely reverses the mode of expanding in an altruistic direction the Benthamite Hedonism adopted by Mill. It is because he does so that his Utilitarianism is, from an intellectual point of view, so great an advance upon Mill's: though the change of front involves some sacrifice of the peculiar unction which makes Mill's *Utilitarianism* so persuasive a book to young students of Philosophy. Professor Sidgwick sees that the admission of difference in kind among

[1] In what sense this assumption of Chemistry is actually true, it is unnecessary here to enquire.

[2] 'To illustrate this farther, we may remember that virtue is not the only thing, originally a means, and which if it were not a means to anything else, would be and remain indifferent, but which by association with what it is a means to, comes to be desired for itself, and that too with the utmost intensity. What, for example, shall we say of the love of money? There is nothing originally more desirable about money than about any heap of glittering pebbles. Its worth is solely that of the things which it will buy; the desire for other things than itself, which it is a means of gratifying. Yet the love of money is not only one of the strongest moving forces of human life, but money is, in many cases, desired in and for itself. . . . Virtue, according to the utilitarian conception, is a good of this description' (*Utilitarianism*, pp. 55, 56).

[3] *The Methods of Ethics*, 1st ed., 1874; 6th ed., 1901.

pleasures is utterly irreconcilable, not only with the hedonistic Psychology which he abandons, but with the hedonistic conception of ultimate good which he retains; while, on the other hand, the 'greatest-happiness principle' defined as 'the creed which holds that actions are right in proportion as they tend to promote happiness, wrong as they tend to produce the reverse of happiness,' is not *prima facie* bound up with the doctrine that all desires are desires of pleasure.

Professor Sidgwick fully admits as a psychological fact the existence of 'disinterested affections,' Benevolence among the number. He rightly, however, distinguishes (with Butler, but in opposition to Shaftesbury and others) between the possibility of action motived by desire for the happiness of others and the reasonableness or obligation of gratifying such a desire in opposition to private interest. In point of disinterestedness Benevolence is on a level with Malevolence. But besides these 'particular affections' (to use Butler's expression) or desires for particular objects, Professor Sidgwick recognizes also the possibility of a 'desire to do what is right and reasonable as such.' And he does not in any way shrink from the admission that such a desire amounts to what Butler would call a desire to do what Conscience prescribes, or what Kant would call a 'respect' for the Moral Law [1]. When a man contemplates himself in his relations to his fellow men and asks what it is reasonable for him to do, he cannot but recognize that he seems 'made,' as Butler would put it, to promote public good. A reasonable man contemplating the world as an impartial spectator, uninfluenced by private desires or passions, would necessarily recognize Benevolence as that affection in the 'œconomy and constitution of human nature' which ought to be gratified in preference to merely self-regarding desires. To the disinterested spectator more good must appear preferable to less good, irrespective of the question whether it is *A* or *B* who is benefited, while the same disinterested Reason will prescribe an equal distribution of good among beings capable of enjoying it. The right course of action is that which would appear reasonable to such a dis-

[1] Von Hartmann uses the expressive term 'Vernunfttrieb' (*Das sittliche Bewusstsein*, pp. 264, 270).

interested spectator, and to the agent himself in so far as his judgement as a rational being is unbiassed by private desires; it is the course of action which, if he had to legislate for others unbiassed by such desires, he would prescribe to all, the course which as a rational being he recognizes as 'fit to be made law universal.' In his view of Duty as the reasonable course of action, and in holding that disinterested love of the reasonable may be a motive of action, Sidgwick follows Butler and Kant, who are so far in entire agreement. But Sidgwick (here identifying himself with Butler more closely than with Kant) also recognizes that to the rational being placed in the position of an impartial spectator, it must appear in itself equally reasonable that each man should pursue his own greatest happiness. When a man's own greatest happiness would have to be purchased by the sacrifice of greater happiness on the part of others, the reasonable course may still seem to be the promotion of the happiness of others at the expense of one's own, so long as he looks upon the matter from the point of view of universal Reason; and an impulse more or less strongly impelling to such a sacrifice is actually felt, at least at times, by all rational beings. But, all the same, it remains something apparently unreasonable—something contrary to that order of things which a perfectly rational being endowed with unlimited power might be expected to appoint—that the happiness of one should involve a voluntary deduction by another from his own in itself no less important happiness. Man is made to promote public good, but no less evidently is he made to promote private good. Hence Sidgwick abandons the attempt to find in cases of collision between the requirements of universalistic and of egoistic Hedonism any course of action which is completely reasonable—reasonable from every point of view—without the admission of theological postulates. Entirely apart from such postulates, altruistic conduct can be shown to be reasonable: it is the course which will be chosen, as the more reasonable of the two alternatives, even in opposition to interest, by the man in whom the desire to do 'what is right and reasonable as such' is predominant; but such a course can be shown to be *the one and only* reasonable course, and the contrary to be completely and

wholly unreasonable, only by the aid of a 'hypothesis unverifiable by experience reconciling the individual with the universal Reason[1],' that the Universe is constructed upon a reasonable basis. And this assumption is one which on the whole the writer seems disposed himself to concede, though, at least in his later editions, he makes no positive assertion to that effect.

The great modern champion of rationalistic or universalistic Hedonism certainly cannot be charged with any desire to conceal the extent of his approximation to the position of Butler and Kant. He is at one with them in the point of view from which he regards the whole subject. He does not look upon the Science of Morals as a branch of Natural History. He gives up altogether the attempt to find the ultimate end of action by 'induction': he sees that no accumulation of observed sequences, no experience of what *is*, no predictions of what *will be*, can possibly prove what *ought to be*. He neither dismisses the 'ought' as a figment (with Bentham), nor involves the whole discussion in inextricable confusion (with J. S. Mill) by failing to distinguish between the desirable and the desired, and calling a desire for the happiness of others a 'desire for happiness,' a mode of speaking which would allow us to define the passion of revenge as a 'desire for pain, injury, or death.' In one word, Professor Sidgwick shares with the father of Idealism the supreme conviction that *νοῦς κρατεῖ πάντα*. He recognizes that Morality is based upon rational and *a priori* judgements of value. In so far as the motive of moral action in the individual is concerned, Professor Sidgwick is in fact an 'Intuitionist' or 'Rationalist.' He is a Hedonist only in his view of the nature of ultimate or universal Good, and consequently in his view of the moral criterion. The fundamental question raised by Professor Sidgwick's position is the logical compatibility of a rationalistic theory of duty with a hedonistic conception of

[1] This phrase is taken from the 1st edition (p. 473), but Prof. Sidgwick's statement of the absolute necessity of such a harmony to the construction of a logically coherent Science of Ethics is rather strengthened than weakened in the subsequent editions; though he seems, rather from a desire not to go beyond the province of pure Ethics than from any change of personal opinion, to assert less strongly, or not to assert at all, that the intuitions of Moral Philosophy actually do supply a basis for Theology.

the true good or τέλος of man. Before discussing this question, it will be well to re-state Professor Sidgwick's position in a somewhat more concise form.

Looking upon human nature in Butlerian phrase as 'a system' or 'constitution,' Professor Sidgwick may be said to find in it three distinct groups of 'affections' or 'propensions,' viz. (1) the desire for happiness or private good, or 'self-love'; (2) various disinterested desires for objects, i. e. passions such as Benevolence, hunger, anger, &c.; (3) the desire to do what is right and reasonable as such. In the 'calm moment' when a man, under the influence of this last desire, sits down to ask what it is reasonable for him to do, reflection convinces him, according to Professor Sidgwick :—(*a*) that for himself (assuming certain postulates which upon the whole he is justified in assuming) it is reasonable to gratify, in cases of collision, Benevolence in preference to self-love, but to make the gratification of all other passions subordinate and instrumental to the promotion of his own interest on the whole; (*b*) that in acting for the good of others, it is reasonable to gratify their other desires or passions only in so far as these can be made subservient to the satisfaction of their desire for happiness. In short, in himself he is to recognize Benevolence as having a prerogative over self-love, though both desires are rational; while in others he is to treat self-love as alone among these desires or propensions entitled to gratification. It is a duty to promote universal good, but universal good is merely pleasure. It is right to promote pleasure, but it is not the individual's own good to do so.

Such a position seems open to the following objections: (1) If we look not so much to the speculative as to the practical side of Sidgwick's Utilitarianism, and put aside certain admissions as to the logical incompleteness of his position, we may say that his attitude towards *duty* was the attitude of Butler or Kant, while his attitude towards the idea of *good* was that of the Hedonist pure and simple. He tells the individual to promote other people's good, but he tells them also that other people's good is pleasure. Reason bids him make duty rather than private pleasure his own end, but in thinking what is the end that he is to promote for other people, it pronounces that end to be pleasure.

He thus assigns a different end to the individual and to the race. Professor Sidgwick in fact proves unfaithful to the principle which he professes to accept from Kant—not, indeed, as an adequate definition, but as a fundamental characteristic of the Moral Law—that it shall be 'capable of serving for law universal.' It is pronounced right and reasonable for *A* to make sacrifices of his own happiness to the good of *B*; yet, in considering what is *B*'s good, he is to treat him as a being for whom it is right and reasonable to live solely for his own happiness, to have no desire gratified but his desire for pleasure. It is a condition of the Moral Law, Professor Sidgwick tells us, that it shall be, in Kantian phrase, 'capable of serving for law universal'; yet that law requires each individual to act upon the hypothesis that he is the only member of the human race subject to it. Reason, we are told, requires us to act at times in a way contrary to our interest from love of the 'right and reasonable as such'; yet we are to treat all other human beings but ourselves as incapable of rational desires, as beings for whom it is reasonable to desire nothing but pleasure. Moral action is rational action; and rational action consists in the gratifying of desires which, it is admitted, become irrational and immoral as soon as they collide with the general interest. Such a consequence can only be avoided by the admission that other people's happiness is only a rational object of pursuit, for them as for me, in so far as it is not inconsistent with their promotion of the general pleasure. The nature of our universal end will then be profoundly modified. The end becomes not mere happiness but a social or moral happiness—a happiness which is consistent with a disposition on the part of each member of the society to promote the happiness of every other in so far as he can do so without sacrificing a greater amount of his own. Morality or Goodness would thus seem to have entered into our practical conception of the end which we are to regard as desirable for human society.

(2) Sidgwick would no doubt have replied to the above objection by frankly admitting the 'dualism of the Practical Reason.' A man may recognize, he wrote in his third edition, that 'There is something that it is reasonable for him to desire, when he

considers himself as an independent unit, and something again which he must recognize as reasonably to be desired, when he takes the point of view of a larger whole; the former of these objects I call his own Ultimate "Good," and the latter Ultimate Good taken universally; while to the sacrifice of the part to the whole, which is from the point of view of the whole reasonable, I apply the different term "right" to avoid confusion[1].' It is no doubt quite intelligible that one thing should appear reasonably to be desired from a man's own point of view, and another thing when he takes the point of view of a larger whole. But can both of these points of view be equally reasonable? How can it be reasonable to take the point of view of the part when once the man knows the existence of the whole and admits that the whole is more important than the part? Must not the point of the view of the whole be the one and only reasonable point of view? From the point of view of the whole, the worker for the good of the whole can alone seem reasonable. The only reasonable point of view surely must be the one which recognizes all the facts. From that point of view the promotion of *the* good can alone be the reasonable course of action. The reasonable course is to promote the general good, for the general good is greater than the good of the individual. There is surely no logical contradiction involved in holding that it is intrinsically right and reasonable to promote the good, though such a course will not always be consistent with the individual's own good; for Reason bids us promote not merely what is good, but the greatest good, and to promote one's own lesser good, just because it is one's own, will be completely and entirely unreasonable.

(3) If the Egoist is pronounced reasonable when he says 'my pleasure is good,' and the universalistic Hedonist equally reasonable when he says 'the general pleasure is good,' does not that show that the terms 'reasonable' and 'good' are really used in different senses? What is there in common between the 'good for me' and 'objective good taken universally'? The objective universal point of view really implied (by Professor Sidgwick's own admission) in the terms 'reasonable' and 'good,'

[1] *Methods of Ethics*, 3rd ed., p. 402.

seems to be forgotten when it is contended that the promotion of the individual's good, even when inconsistent with the general good, is nevertheless a reasonable object of pursuit. The writer seems to be relapsing into that meaning of the term 'reasonable' which has generally found favour with Hedonists who do not profess to be 'rationalistic'—that is to say, 'internally self-consistent' or 'conducive as a means to the end which any one happens actually to desire.'

(4) The difficulties which have been pointed out might possibly be evaded by a new mode of statement[1]. But if this were done—if it were frankly admitted that the Egoist's conduct is not really reasonable at all—even so the attitude of mind which universalistic Hedonism ascribes to the good man is one which, when fully realized is, I believe, practically, at least to the great mass of men, an impossible one. There is no logical contradiction in telling me to promote other people's good at the expense of my own, because it is intrinsically and objectively reasonable so to do. But for me to act on this rational principle there must be a subjective reason, or motive. Granted that it is reasonable for me so to act, the question still remains 'Why should I be reasonable?' The Sidgwickian Moralist might tell me that I have a desire to act reasonably. I reply: 'Yes, I have such a tendency, but it is, taken by itself, not a very strong one, and it is in my power to encourage it or to suppress it. I want you to give me some reason why, since you say my own true good is nothing but pleasure, I should pursue an end which is not my good. An abstract or objective Reason may indeed condemn me if I do not, but I cannot from my own point of view condemn myself when I pursue what, as you say, Reason itself tells me is my own true good, and decline (so far as I can help it) to trouble myself about an end which is not my good. The whole force of the subjective hold which the precept "be reasonable" has exercised over me, so long as I was unacquainted with the

[1] The passage just quoted has disappeared from the fourth and subsequent editions of Sidgwick's great work, and with it some other concessions to the rationality of Egoism, but not all: see for instance the note on p. 200 of the 4th edition (which has since disappeared), and the concluding paragraph of the final edition.

teachings of rational Utilitarianism, has lain in its inseparable connexion with another conviction—that it was intrinsically noble for me to act in this way, and that to act in accordance with the reasonable was a good to me, a greater good than I could obtain by pursuing the pleasure which you tell me is the only true good. Destroy that conviction, and I have no motive for trying to cultivate the love of rational action or that love of my neighbour which Reason pronounces to be reasonable. You have convinced me that there is nothing intrinsically good and noble about the promotion of other people's happiness. It is a very nice thing for other people no doubt, but it is not nice for me. It is in vain that you tell me that concentration upon my private happiness is selfish and irrational, for you tell me also that selfishness and irrationality are not bad in themselves, however inconvenient they may be for other people.'

Another way of stating this last difficulty of Sidgwick's position is to say that the internal contradiction which it involves is at bottom not so much formal as material. It may possibly be stated in a form which escapes formal contradiction, though Sidgwick himself does not always succeed in so stating it, but the internal or psychological contradiction remains. The acceptance of rationalistic Hedonism kills and eradicates all those impulses upon which it has to depend for the practical fulfilment of its own precepts, by pronouncing that they have no true worth or value—no less so than Mill's Associationist explanation of the love of Virtue as due to a psychological confusion and muddle-headedness comparable to that of the miser. It tends to reduce the idea of reasonable conduct to the idea of conduct which escapes intellectual contradiction and incompleteness; but the desire to escape such contradiction or one-sidedness is not by itself a very powerful motive of conduct when it is pronounced to have no intrinsic value. For the contradiction, be it observed, involved in bad conduct arises, on the hedonistic view of good, merely when I attempt to justify my conduct. If I say 'it is reasonable of me to be an Egoist,' I can be convicted of self-contradiction. But if I candidly admit 'I know that it is unreasonable to be an Egoist, but I intend to be unreasonable,' the contradiction disappears. When the prohibition of Reason is

held to include a specifically moral condemnation, the idea of 'unreasonable' carries with it the idea that conduct condemned is lacking in absolute or intrinsic worth. That idea is lost or pronounced illusive when to act reasonably is denied to be good. The whole force which makes Reason appeal to men as deserving of respect it derives from that conviction of the intrinsic value or goodness of rational conduct which Reason, as interpreted by Sidgwick, pronounces to be an illusion. We are hardly perhaps entitled to say *a priori*[1] that Reason could not deliver itself of two dogmas, which, though involving no formal contradiction, tend in their practical effect upon human life to neutralize one another—the dogma 'it is reasonable to be altruistic' and the dogma 'to be reasonable is not a good to him who is reasonable or even intrinsically a good at all': but it would be strange that that moral consciousness, which by the rationalistic Hedonist's admission proclaims its right to govern and control human life, should be so constituted that, in so far as men listen to its voice, its own purposes are defeated. There is in the last resort no way of refuting the Sidgwickian or any other Moralist but by showing that he actually misrepresents the content of the moral consciousness. And this, I have tried to show, the Sidgwickian Moralist conspicuously does. He abstracts one half of the moral consciousness as it actually exists, and attempts by the aid of it to silence and confound the other half. He accepts from the moral consciousness the abstract idea of value, of intrinsic and objective worth, and at the same time divorces it from that idea of the intrinsic worth of promoting what has worth, which is *de facto* found in inseparable conjunction with it. The only way in which this internal inconsistency or discord in the Sidgwickian system can be cured is by admitting that to act rightly or reasonably possesses value, that to promote the good is a good not merely to others, but to the individual himself.

(5) But after all, Professor Sidgwick fully admits that he cannot make Reason consistent with itself without the admission of

[1] Without assuming the rationality of the Universe. Upon that assumption, which Sidgwick was practically prepared to make, the position to me becomes unthinkable, as contended in the next paragraph.

theological postulates. 'The negation of the connexion between Virtue and Self-interest,' he tells us, 'must force us to admit an ultimate and fundamental contradiction in our apparent intuitions of what is Reasonable in conduct; and from this admission it would seem to follow that the apparently intuitive operation of the Practical Reason, manifested in these contradictory judgements, is after all illusory[1].' We must, therefore, go on to ask whether, upon Professor Sidgwick's premisses, these theological postulates are admissible, and whether (even if admitted) they will suffice to restore the internal self-consistency of the Practical Reason.

The difficulties which the great sum of human and animal suffering presents to the belief in a 'benevolent Author of Nature' ought not to be dissembled by those who believe that Reason warrants the 'venture of faith' and who hold (with Plato) that 'the risk is a noble one[2].' But, on the hedonistic view of the true end of human life, does not the demand made upon faith become absolutely overwhelming? Can a Universe have a rational purpose or constitution in which the end is only pleasure and yet in which Reason daily prompts to the sacrifice of pleasure? Surely the assumption of a 'harmony between the Universal and the Particular Reason' must be pushed a step further. The faith that 'Reason is for us King of Heaven and Earth[3],' never found a more eloquent or a more sober exponent than Professor Sidgwick. But in what sense can it be said that Reason rules in a Universe in which the accomplishment of its true purpose depends upon a systematic concealment of that purpose? It is the sole end or τέλος of man to get as much pleasure as possible: yet in order that he may do so, he is throughout his earthly existence, by way of preparation or discipline for the realization of his true end in another state, to forget that end and live for a totally different one.

So completely does Professor Sidgwick reverse in dealing with the ultimate *ground* of morality the Aristotelian maxim 'that we must look to the end,' upon which he lays so much stress in connexion with the moral *criterion*. We must believe in a future

[1] *Methods of Ethics*, 6th ed., p. 506. [2] Καλὸν τὸ κινδύνευμα.
[3] Νοῦς ἐστὶ βασιλεὺς ἡμῖν οὐρανοῦ τε καὶ γῆς (Philebus, p. 28 c).

life, Professor Sidgwick tells us, because we must believe that the constitution of things is rational. And yet, according to Professor Sidgwick, the Universe is so constituted that the man who most completely succeeds in concealing from himself the true end of his being—or haply in never finding it out—will ultimately realize that end most thoroughly. That the Universe might be so constituted is a proposition which does not involve a logical contradiction, and which is incapable of empirical disproof; but where is the rationality of such a Universe? If we are to make assumptions, let them be such as will satisfy the logical demand on which they are founded. If we are to assume a rational order in the Universe, surely the end prescribed to a man by his Reason must be his highest end. Man is so far a rational being that he is capable of preferring the rational to the pleasant. Surely, then, the reasonableness of such a preference cannot be *dependent* on its ultimately turning out that he has after all preferred the very thing which his love of the reasonable led him to reject. It may be the case that what was rejected had a certain value and would under other circumstances have been good; it may be that it is reasonable to expect the preference of the higher good to be rewarded by the bestowal of the lower also. But surely in a rational Universe that which man, when he is most completely rational, desires most cannot be good merely as a means to what he desires less—in other words, it must have an intrinsic value. Bain's remark that '"I am to be miserable" cannot be an inference from "I am to be happy,"' is a perfectly fair comment or criticism[1] upon a Theology which is founded upon a purely hedonistic conception of the good. If, however, the end of man be goodness or a happiness of which Virtue is an essential element, then it is not unreasonable that he should be required to undergo sufferings which may be necessary conditions of attaining that end for himself and others. If happiness be the true end, a constitution of things by which the neglect of happiness should be rewarded with happiness and devotion to happiness punished by the loss of it, would be a purely arbitrary, supremely irrational constitution. But if goodness be the end without which the highest happiness is

[1] *Mind*, vol. i, p. 195.

incomplete, if goodness be of the essence of the highest happiness, then it is not inconceivable that the voluntary neglect of a lower good in the pursuit of a higher may be intrinsically necessary to the attainment of that completed state of being, of a life which shall embrace both these concepts of goodness and happiness which Modern Philosophy has been accustomed to separate—the 'Well-being' or εὐδαιμονία of ancient Ethics. If Love be indeed the one element of earthly happiness which is to be permanent, then it is intelligible enough that Self-sacrifice should be a discipline necessary to fit men for its enjoyment.

I will add only one further remark at present on this supreme problem upon which the course of Professor Sidgwick's argument has compelled me to touch. Sidgwick claims Bishop Butler as his predecessor in the doctrine of an 'ultimate dualism' of the Practical Reason. It is true that when Bishop Butler, the thinker who has so profoundly modified Professor Sidgwick's hedonistic tendencies, was engaged in writing Moral Philosophy as the champion of the 'disinterestedness' of virtue against the Hobbist, when he touched upon theological problems only as accessory to moral, he was satisfied with a position very much resembling that of his disciple. Conscience or a 'principle of reflection' prescribed certain conduct as rational irrespectively of the interest of the individual; his highest end was duty. The existence of Conscience was to Butler the basis of Theology, not Theology the basis of Morality. Yet when he wrote the *Sermons*, he still regarded the happiness of the whole as the only conceivable end of the Creator as well as of altruistic conduct in the individual[1]. When he came seriously to face the question of the 'moral government of the world,' the difficulties of such a position were forced upon his notice. The result of the ten years' thought which intervened between the *Sermons* and the *Analogy* were embodied in those chapters of the latter work on human life as 'a state of discipline,' which may still be regarded as (in spite of their rather old-world form and tone) the classical exposition of that one glimpse of a clue to the problem of the origin of evil which is open to those who refuse to be led by a desire for 'reconciliation' or 'unity' and a philosophical horror

[1] See the second paragraph of *Sermon XII* and *Sermon XIII*.

of 'dualism' into some form or other of the denial that evil is evil.

The substance then of my contention is that Professor Sidgwick's attempt to reconcile a hedonistic conception of the 'good,' and consequently a hedonistic criterion of Morality, with an 'intuitional' or rational basis or ultimate ground of Morality breaks down. The 'dualism' of Practical Reason is not bridged over, and cannot be bridged over without the admission of Virtue or character—at least the Virtue or character which consists in the promotion of general pleasure—as an element and the highest element of the 'good' which it is right to promote for the whole human race.

III

At this point it may be well briefly to notice Professor Sidgwick's criticism on the doctrine that character is an end-in-itself. In reference to this view Professor Sidgwick remarks :—

'From a practical point of view, indeed, I fully recognise the importance of urging that men should aim at an ideal of character, and consider action in its effects on character. But I cannot infer from this that character and its elements—faculties, habits, or dispositions of any kind—are the constituents of Ultimate Good. It seems to me that the opposite is implied in the very conception of a faculty or disposition; it can only be defined as a tendency to act or feel in a certain way under certain conditions; and such a tendency is clearly not valuable in itself but for the acts and feelings in which it takes effect, or for the ulterior consequences of these,—which consequences, again, cannot be regarded as Ultimate Good, so long as they are merely conceived as modifications of faculties, dispositions,' &c.[1]

Professor Sidgwick here admits the possibility that the 'acts' in which character or disposition takes effect might conceivably have value. He has nothing to say against such a supposition except that they do not appear to him to have any value. But surely, when it is held that character has value, such 'acts' are included in the idea. And yet the value of the acts cannot be estimated in entire isolation or abstraction from the man's

[1] *Methods of Ethics*, 6th ed., p. 393.

whole inner life. Character does not consist of mere isolated 'acts'—and still less of mere abstract 'tendencies' or 'dispositions.' Not only are the actual volitions involved in the performance of particular good acts parts of consciousness, and not mere possibilities of consequences in the external world, but there is a volitional element running through our consciousness at other times than the particular moment at which we are definitely resisting temptation or making definite acts of moral choice. Attention is an act of the will; even desire involves conation. Emotion, again, is at once a source of action, an accompaniment of moral action, and a consequence and index of the habitual direction of the will. And all these—desire, attention, emotion—are actual elements of consciousness, not mere potentialities which may manifest themselves in future conscious acts. All these are included in what we mean by character. Sometimes no doubt we should further include in the ideal character the intellectual side of the moral life—the ideal that a man sets before himself, the judgements of value which he pronounces, his intellectual interest in the moral life. Professor Sidgwick would hardly have contended that the content of the good man's consciousness does not differ from that of the bad man except at the particular moments in which the former is engaged in performing good actions and the latter bad ones. Character includes, as I have suggested, not merely the actual state of the will, but other elements of consciousness connected therewith. And even if we limit the idea of character to actual volition, volition is an element in the continuous stream of consciousness at all times. Sidgwick himself has told us for instance that 'the adoption of an end as paramount' is 'to be classed among volitions.' A volitional element forms an element of consciousness during the whole—or, to avoid cavil, let me say—nearly the whole of his waking life. And it is upon the nature of this volitional element, upon the nature of the objects to which it is directed, upon the habitual direction of his will, that character primarily depends. It is this that is pronounced to have value when we say that Virtue is a good or end in itself. No doubt we cannot form any conception of character without thinking also of the in-

tellectual and emotional accompaniments of the volition; and it makes little difference whether we do or do not think of these accompaniments as included in the conception of character. For these too have a value which is not to be measured by the amount or intensity of the pleasure which undoubtedly forms an element in them. The important point to insist on is that, when we pronounce character to have value, we are just as emphatically as the Hedonist pronouncing that it is in actual consciousness that value resides, and in nothing else [1]. It is the actual consciousness of a man who loves and wills the truly or essentially good and not mere capacities or potentialities of pleasure-production such as might be supposed to reside in a bottle of old port, which constitutes the 'goodness' or 'virtue' which is regarded as a 'good' or 'end in itself' by the school which Professor Sidgwick is criticizing. A 'virtue' or 'faculty' is, of course (as Professor Sidgwick urges), a mere abstraction, but only in the sense in which pleasure is an abstraction also. A man's consciousness cannot at any one moment be full of nothing but Virtue any more than it can be full of nothing but pleasure. The will must will something if it is to be pronounced virtuous, just as there must be feelings, thoughts, and volitions in a man's consciousness before he can be pleased with them. But for the difficulty which Sidgwick seems to make of the matter, it would have seemed unnecessary to point out that those who make 'virtue' an end mean by virtue 'virtuous consciousness,' just as those who make 'pleasure' an end mean thereby 'pleasant consciousness.' And the virtuous consciousness means a consciousness whose volitions and whose desires are controlled by a rational ideal of life together with the feelings and emotions inseparably accompanying such volitions and desires [2].

[1] We might also criticize Prof. Sidgwick's tendency to ignore the unity and the continuity of the self. No doubt the self cannot be regarded as having value when abstracted from the successive conscious states in which it manifests itself, but it is equally impossible to estimate the value of the conscious states in entire abstraction from the permanent self which is present in all of them.

[2] Modern Psychology is emphatic in rejecting the old sensationalistic view of the content of consciousness as mere feeling, no less than the opposite assumption of the possibility of thought without volition. 'Whenever

It may perhaps be suggested that, when a good state of will is pronounced desirable, or more desirable than a pleasant state of consciousness, the real object of preference is a specific pleasure invariably accompanying volition of a virtuous kind. It is difficult to see what is gained by such a mode of statement for any one who has once parted company with the hedonistic Psychology: but, since some pleasure must undoubtedly accompany consciousness to which the person himself attaches value, no great harm will be done either to ethical theory or to practical Morality by such a way of putting the matter so long as it is clearly understood (1) that the desirability of this specific pleasure does not depend upon any variable susceptibility to it on the part of those for whom it is judged desirable; (2) that the pleasure is not necessarily to those who actually desire it greater in amount or intensity than other pleasures which they forego for the sake of obtaining it. Yet when these admissions are made, it is clear that we no longer really prefer the virtuous direction of the will simply as a source of pleasure. From the point of view of pleasure there seems no reason why this single kind of pleasure should be given so extraordinary a preference. It is one which does not seem to be warranted either by its duration or its intensity. As a matter of experience

we are awake, we are judging; whenever we are awake we are willing' (Bosanquet, *Essentials of Logic*, p. 40). Mr. Bradley has, indeed, maintained the possibility of thought without 'active attention' and so without will (article on 'Active Attention' in *Mind*, N. S., No. 41, 1902), though he admits that it may be that even in the theoretical development of an idea 'the foregoing idea of that development has itself been the cause of its own existence,' and so 'it may indeed be contended that *all* thinking does in the end imply will in this sense' (p. 7). The question is an important one from other points of view, but all that I am protesting against here is the assumption that in estimating the value of consciousness we must necessarily attend merely to the feeling side, and not also to the thinking and willing side of consciousness. That will be equally unreasonable in whatever sense it may be true that we are not always willing. I should myself be disposed to contend that the active attention which is implied in definite efforts to think out a problem differs only in degree from the attention which is implied when 'I passively, as we say, accept the current and course of my thoughts' (ib., p. 6). This very 'passivity' involves a distinct attitude of the will—sometimes a very difficult one, as a man discovers when with a view to going to sleep he tries to think about nothing in particular.

it is found that the pleasures of a good Conscience are not always highly exhilarating: while the pains of a bad one, regarded merely as pains, would in many cases be found tolerable enough. The pain of a small wrong-doing is probably to most men less exquisite than the pain of having made a fool of oneself or committed a gross social blunder. If we regarded the pains of a bad Conscience as merely on a level with the pains of a *gaucherie*, we should try to live down the former as we do the latter. The importance that we attribute to a 'good Conscience' (quite apart from its social effects) cannot possibly be explained on merely hedonistic grounds; the value we attribute to it is not merely the value which it possesses as a source of pleasure, and the pleasures of Conscience themselves spring from and presuppose the consciousness of a value in conscientious conduct which is not measured by its pleasantness.

Sidgwick's arguments against the possibility of regarding truth, beauty, and the like as ends-in-themselves may, as it seems to me, be met in much the same way. He always seems to assume that to assign value to such ends irrespective of their pleasantness[1] is to assign value to them as things existing outside consciousness altogether. It does not seem to make much practical difference whether we say that there are elements in consciousness 'higher' than pleasure, or whether we say that some pleasures are 'higher' than others, so long as no attempt is made to smuggle back the hedonistic Psychology under cover of the latter form of expression. And yet it ought distinctly to be recognized that such preference of higher pleasures as higher is really only a popular way of saying that the true ethical end contains elements other than pleasure. All that is gained by the former way of putting the matter is that it suggests that pleasure is an element of any state of mind which can be regarded as possessing any ultimate value. And this need not be denied, so long as it is recognized that its value is not due solely to the amount or intensity of the pleasure, and that, though such a state may contain some pleasure, it may contain a great deal more pain and so be on the whole painful rather than pleasurable.

[1] But see below, pp. 75–78.

One more of Professor Sidgwick's difficulties may be briefly considered. To the contention that we sometimes prefer what are commonly called higher pleasures to lower ones without necessarily thinking the former more intense than the latter, Sidgwick replies that 'what in such cases we really prefer is not the present consciousness itself, but either effects on future consciousness more or less distinctly foreseen, or else something in the objective relations of the conscious being, not strictly included in his present consciousness[1].' No doubt the pleasure is preferred on account of the person's objective relations: the pleasure abstracted from all knowledge of such objective relations would be pleasure abstracted from most of those characteristics which could make it higher pleasure, from most of the features which could commend it to the Practical Reason as more worthy of a rational being's enjoyment than the lower pleasure. It is just because some knowledge of the 'objective relations' of his pleasures and of himself as enjoying them always does enter into the consciousness of a rational being enjoying pleasure, that it is impossible for him, desiring as he does other things besides pleasure and recognizing it as 'right' or 'reasonable' for him to desire such other objects, to leave them out of account in considering the intrinsic desirability of different kinds of consciousness for himself and other rational beings. For such a being the pleasure itself becomes different in consequence of this knowledge of his own objective relations—different in value even when it is not altered in quantity. The pleasure which a man might take in a cruel entertainment might be harmless enough, if abstracted from his knowledge that the pleasure was won by the sufferings of a fellow creature. The pleasures of sense could not be condemned or disparaged in comparison with more social or more intellectual pleasures, but for the knowledge that the person enjoying them is a member of a society and capable of intellectual activities. The value which a man attaches to his love for wife and children or to the resulting pleasures could not be explained apart from knowledge of the 'objective relations' implied in marriage or paternity. To ask what is the ultimate good of man apart from his knowledge of

[1] *Methods of Ethics*, 6th ed., p. 399.

the 'objective relations' in which he stands to the world and to his fellow men is really to ask what *would be* the good for man if he were a mere animal.

Sidgwick's unwillingness to recognize Virtue as an end in itself, in spite of his admission that it is reasonable to prefer it to private pleasure, appears to arise largely from an unavowed assumption that there are no other elements in consciousness besides feeling, or at least that no such elements can possibly possess ultimate value. It is impossible to prove that this last is not the case; we can only ask, 'Is this really what the analysis of the moral consciousness reveals to us; or, if we are disposed to say that it is always the feeling that is ultimately valuable, are not the feelings to which we ascribe such value feelings of a kind which are inseparable from certain volitions and certain thoughts? And do we not assign a higher value to a rightly directed will, or to the emotions accompanying such a will, than to mere pleasant feeling considered merely as so much pleasant feeling?'

When all has been done that can be done in the way of developing the difficulties of a Utilitarianism which is at once rationalistic and hedonistic, it must be admitted that it is impossible to convict such a position of *formal* inconsistency, when once it is modified by the admission that Egoism is unreasonable, though there is nothing (on hedonistic grounds) to be said against a man who likes to be unreasonable. It is not the theory that is inconsistent; it is the procedure of Reason which according to the theory is essentially arbitrary and unintelligible. The attitude of Sidgwick's good man, at least when enlightened by Philosophy, may be said to be just this: 'I see that it is reasonable for me to prefer my neighbour's good, but this preference has in it nothing intrinsically desirable or beautiful or noble or worth having for its own sake. Duty is duty, but it is not good. Duty is reasonable, but pleasure is better; what the irrational man secures to himself by selfishness is intrinsically better than what the good man gets by obeying the voice of Reason within him.' And the position of the Sidgwickian Reason does not become more intelligible when we attempt to bridge over the

collision between duty and interest by theological assumptions. If Reason, expressing itself in the constitution of the Universe, really does say to the bad man, 'I am sorry that I cannot reward this consistent selfishness of yours as I should like to do; but I am compelled to think of other people besides you, and in their interests I am compelled to punish a course of life and a direction of will which in a better constituted world it would give me the greatest satisfaction to reward,' there is no more to be said. But does a Universe constructed on such a principle really strike us as a particularly reasonable one?

In the last resort the only way of showing that pleasure is not the true end of life is by an appeal to one's own moral consciousness and that of others so far as it is revealed by word and deed. Professor Sidgwick, after admitting that a consistent system might be worked out upon the basis of a composite end, i.e. on including both Virtue and happiness, adds: 'I can give a decisive reason for not accepting it myself: *viz.*, that when Virtue and Happiness are hypothetically presented as alternatives, from a universal point of view, I have no doubt that I morally prefer the latter; I should not think it right to aim at making my fellow-creatures more moral, if I distinctly foresaw that as a consequence of this they would become less happy. I should even make a similar choice as regards my own future virtue, supposing it presented as an alternative to results more conducive to the General Happiness[1].' All that the critic of such a statement can do is to invite the reader to say whether he can accept it as a correct representation of his own moral consciousness—or of Henry Sidgwick's.

With the question whether the Virtue either of individuals or of society can ever be antagonistic to the general happiness we are not yet concerned. My contention so far has been merely this—that as a matter of fact the judgement 'It is right for me to make others happy' is practically inseparable from the judge-

[1] *Mind*, No. xiv, 1889, p. 487. It is observable that Sidgwick shrinks from saying that he would sacrifice his Virtue to his own pleasure if he could do so without loss of pleasure to others. Whether the sacrifice of happiness to Virtue could ever actually be required by Benevolence I have considered in Book II, chap. ii, § 2.

ment 'It is better for me to do that than to be happy myself at their expense.' Admitting the bare logical possibility of accepting the former judgement while denying the latter, I believe that such a bare speculative admission of the reasonableness of Altruism would have little or no practical effect upon the majority of minds but for that recognition of its intrinsic goodness by which it is practically accompanied. Reason is reluctant to admit that rationality can ever be a bad thing or even a matter of indifference. No consideration of posthumous compensation will ever reconcile Reason to a constitution of things in which it is compelled to pronounce bad, on account of their effects, kinds of conduct which in themselves it cannot but find very good. The emotions with which we actually contemplate good or bad conduct would droop and wither were we ever once fully persuaded that there is no difference between a good and a bad man except what is constituted by some accidental want of 'adjustment' between the interests of an individual and that of his fellows. Once persuade men that Thrasymachus was right in making Virtue essentially and fundamentally only another man's good, and you will have persuaded them also that it exists by convention and not by nature (*νόμῳ, οὐ φύσει*)—that it is in short a delusion, not a reality; and with the belief in the intrinsic value of goodness will go the theological beliefs that were based upon it.

IV

Let us see then exactly to what point the course of our argument has carried us. We have felt compelled by the very considerations that led us to regard the preference of other people's well-being to our own as rational, to treat such a preference on our part as intrinsically better even for ourselves. We have in fact (with Kant) recognized the existence of two *prima facie* rational ends—Virtue and Happiness, the latter being treated as part of the true well-being of man only in so far as is consistent with the predominance of Virtue.

It has been objected, indeed, to such a position, both by Professor Sidgwick himself and by others, that such a position involves the admission of two heterogeneous and 'incommensur-

able' ends—Virtue and happiness. To this we may reply that the very ground on which we have felt bound to recognize Virtue as an end in itself compels us to regard it as an end superior in value to pleasure. Reason pronounces that there is an end which all human acts should aim at promoting, i.e. the general good, and that no state of a rational will can be regarded by Reason as good which is not directed towards that end; and a will which did not regard the choice of the right as of superior value to pleasure would not be a will directed to that supreme end. The man who acted upon the hypothesis that his own virtue and his own pleasure possessed equal intrinsic value would not really be virtuous at all. The hypothesis is therefore one which contradicts itself. And the principle that the will directed towards the good must be regarded as of more value than the agent's pleasure will equally compel us to regard the pleasure of others as an intrinsically valuable end only in so far as it is consistent with the like preference of the good to the pleasant in those others. In other words, pleasure can only be regarded as intrinsically valuable in so far as it is consistent with Morality. No doubt the 'dualism,' the absolute antagonism between the two ends, the impossibility of fusing them into a harmonious whole in which the sharp contrast between them is lost (so long as all pleasure is put on the same level and is regarded as something which Virtue must simply limit from the outside without modifying and transforming), may be a reason for suspecting that we have not yet reached an adequate and complete view of the elements contained in 'the good.' But there is no absolute logical contradiction involved in such a position; it is not open to the charge that the two ends or elements of the end are 'incommensurable.'

Now, practically, the introduction of this principle—the principle that Virtue must be regarded as an element, and as the dominant element, in the good—will by itself do much to bring our view of the ethical criterion into harmony with ordinarily accepted moral ideas, and to remove some of the more glaring of the difficulties of Utilitarianism as commonly understood. For (1) the most glaring of all the inconsistencies between Utilitarianism and the deliverances of the ordinary,

unsophisticated moral consciousness, lies precisely in its refusal to recognize the intrinsic goodness of Virtue. (2) The inclusion of Virtue (which for the present we take to mean rational Benevolence [1]) in our conception of the end allows us to exclude from it excessive indulgence in the pleasures which we recognize as good in themselves, and also all pleasures which are inconsistent with the predominance of Benevolence, e. g. the pleasures of cruelty. We shall not merely disallow them on account of their 'infelicific' effects, but we shall regard them as intrinsically worthless or bad, because they imply an indifference to the good: we shall condemn the man who voluntarily indulges his taste for them, even though accidentally (as in an arena, for instance, in which the combatants were condemned criminals) he might be able to indulge them in a way not immediately inconsistent with the public interest. (3) We shall attach a high intrinsic value to such pleasures as actually include a benevolent element, and a lower degree of intrinsic superiority to such pleasures as are actually conducive to the public good, though the public good may be no part of the motive of the person indulging in them. Under the first head we should include the actual pleasures of Benevolence or personal affection, and even to some small extent the pleasures of sociability and friendship in so far as these imply some degree of unselfish good-will to others. Under the second we should include the pleasures of ambition or emulation and the whole range of aesthetic and intellectual pleasures.

In this way it would probably be possible to justify, on the whole, that preference for what are commonly called higher pleasures which is so clear an element of the ordinary moral consciousness; since it will be generally admitted that in the long run indulgence in social and intellectual pleasures is more beneficial in its indirect social effects than indulgence in mere sensual gratification or unintellectual amusement. But so far we have interpreted Virtue as including nothing but Benevolence, or rather Benevolence and (in due subordination thereto) Prudence; we have admitted no ground for ascribing superior moral

[1] In the sense of 'desire to promote pleasure on the whole, not excluding one's own pleasure in due proportion.'

value to one pleasure over another except its direct or indirect influence on the pleasure of others. It is now time to ask whether this limitation really corresponds to the deliverances of the moral consciousness. Is there no element in consciousness to which we should upon reflection ascribe intrinsic value except (1) Virtue in the sense of simple Benevolence and (2) Pleasure with a preference for social useful pleasures? Is our conception of the *summum bonum* for a rational being limited to these two elements? If his will invariably prefers (in case of collision) other people's pleasure to his own and if he enjoys as much pleasure as possible, should we say that a human being has all that it is reasonable for him to want? Would a community of simple people enjoying material plenty and innocent amusements in the utmost degree that is consistent with the predominance of the most intense and most universal love—the life for instance of some rude Moravian Mission Settlement—beautiful and noble as such a life might be, realize to the full our highest ideal of human life? Would a community devoid of Letters, of Art, of Learning, of any intellectual cultivation beyond that low elementary school standard which might be regarded as absolutely necessary to Virtue and the enjoyable filling up of leisure—would such a state of society realize our ideal? If it were certain (a by no means extreme supposition) that the communities which have approximated most nearly to this pattern have actually realized a higher average of enjoyment than has ever been attained in more ambitious societies, should we thereupon think it right to adopt an obscurantist policy, to burn down libraries and museums and picture galleries, and to repress all desires for knowledge and beauty which should soar above the standard indicated? Do we not rather judge that such desires *ought* to be gratified, that in their gratification —nay, in the effort to satisfy desires which grow stronger with every partial satisfaction—lies one large element of true human good, one large source of its nobleness and its value? And can such a conviction be based upon the extremely dubious calculation that the pleasures resulting from such pursuits or produced by them in others are invariably intenser, when due allowance is made for the increasing susceptibility to pain which they

bring with them, than those attainable by the healthy and moderate pursuit of more animal satisfactions in due subordination to the activities of social Morality? Should we really be prepared to condemn any study, say that of pure Mathematics, which could be shown to be less 'felicific' than Sciences and Arts of more immediate and obvious 'utility'? To all these questions I can only answer for myself, 'No.' Argument on questions of ultimate ends is impossible. All that I can do is to trace the further modifications which this admission of other ends besides Virtue and happiness will compel us to make in the system of rationalistic Utilitarianism, from which we have already diverged by making Virtue as well as happiness into an element, and the more important element, in our conception of the ultimate end. The view to which we have been led may be briefly expressed as follows. The human soul is a trinity. Consciousness includes three elements or aspects or distinguishable activities—Thought, Feeling, and Volition or (to use a more general term) Conation, each of which is unintelligible in entire abstraction or separation from the rest. There is a good state and a bad state of intellect, of feeling, and of will. The good consists in a certain state of all three of them. It may be true in a certain rough and popular sense that in thought or even in the good will, if either be taken in abstraction from the two other elements, we could discover no value at all, while in pleasure we could find such a value[1]. That is the assumption upon which all Hedonism is based; and the assumption might perhaps be admitted, though we might refuse to admit the inferences based upon it, if we could attach any meaning to pleasure taken absolutely by itself. But it is often forgotten that there is no such thing as pleasure without a content, and this content, which makes the state of consciousness pleasant or unpleasant, is, at least in rational beings, dependent upon the other two aspects of consciousness. It is no doubt possible by an effort of abstraction to think only of the intensity of our pleasurable feelings without thinking of their content, and to make their value depend upon that intensity, but there is no ground whatever for assuming that

[1] Cf. below, pp. 78, 153.

we actually do so or ought to do so. In judging of the ultimate value of any state of consciousness we think of its content—of the state of desire and of will on the one hand and of intellect on the other, as well as of feeling, and of the content of feeling as well as of its intensity. Sometimes we pronounce a less pleasant state of consciousness to be more valuable than a more pleasant one because it involves an activity of the higher intellectual faculties, or because it represents the direction of the will to a higher good. Sometimes, no doubt, the different parts of our nature represented by the trinity of thought, feeling, and will cannot all obtain equal satisfaction by the same course of action, and then we have to choose between a course which will satisfy one part of our nature and that which will satisfy the other; but the ideal good of men would include all three. It would include truth and activity of thought, pleasantness of feeling, and goodness of will. In what relation the goods predominantly connected with each of these elements of our nature stand to each other, we shall in some general way consider hereafter [1]. It will be enough to say here that we have already recognized the supreme value of the good will, i. e. of the devotion of the will towards that which the moral consciousness recognizes as the good for humanity at large, that in the abstract we recognize the superior value of intellectual activities to mere pleasant feeling, while the superiority of certain states of pleasant feeling to others is largely due to their arising to a greater extent than others from the activity of the two higher elements in our nature, the activity of the good will or of the intellect, or both.

V

If we were to enter at greater length into the relation between the different parts or elements or activities of our nature, with which we have just been dealing, we should find ourselves involved in many difficult and important matters of psychological

[1] It will be fully recognized that no one of them can actually exist in entire abstraction from the other. The good will, for instance, must include some pleasant feeling and some knowledge.

controversy. Such psychological problems I wish in the present work to avoid in so far as their solution is not directly and immediately necessary for the purpose of Ethics. But by way of explaining my use of them, a few remarks may be added. I do not adopt the usage of those Psychologists who make feeling equivalent merely to pleasure and pain. Such a usage seems to imply an abstraction of the pleasure from its content, which is not what we really mean when we talk about feeling, and which tends to encourage the idea that we are interested in nothing but the hedonistic intensity of our consciousness apart from its content. By Thought or Reason I do not mean merely discursive thought to the exclusion of immediate perception, but the whole intellectual side of our consciousness; I include in it every kind of awareness. Desire I regard as belonging to the conative or striving side of our nature, though it implies also, and cannot exist apart from, both the intellectual and the feeling side of it: we must know in some measure what we desire, and the desire is itself a state of feeling, though it is more. An emotion is simply a name for a kind of feeling, but the term is usually and properly reserved for those states of feeling which are not, and do not immediately arise from, physical sensations, but imply the existence of ideas and of those higher desires which are directed towards ideal objects. It is obvious that in these distinctions we are concerned with aspects of consciousness rather than with distinct and separable things or facts or 'states.' In some cases the distinction between them is clear and capable by an easy abstraction of a pretty sharp differentiation in our thought: in other cases they are simply the same thing looked at from a slightly different point of view. We have no difficulty for instance in distinguishing processes of mathematical calculation from the pleasant feeling by which they are accompanied in the mathematical mind, or the unpleasant feeling which those processes create in the unmathematical. On the other hand a simple perception of colour must be treated as an intellectual activity when we think of the recognized relation between the person or subject and his object, as a state of feeling when we think of it merely as a state of the subject and from the point of view of his interest in it. Similarly one

and the same desire may be looked upon simply as a particular state of the subject and so as feeling, or as involving the intellectual idea of an end, or again as a conative activity tending to realize that end. Further to illustrate both the distinctions between, and the inter-dependence of, these fundamental aspects of consciousness does not seem necessary to enable us to proceed with our ethical enquiry. All that need here be emphasized is that the value which we recognize in consciousness is not dependent upon any one of these aspects taken in absolute abstraction from another. The extremest Hedonist will find it impossible to attach a clear meaning to the idea of pleasure taken apart from all awareness that one is pleased, or of what one is pleased at; the extremest Rigorist would find it difficult to say what would be the value of a good will which did not know what it willed and did not care whether it willed it or not. And the moral consciousness does not encourage us to approximate to any such feats of abstraction, even in so far as this may be possible. It pronounces its judgement upon the value of consciousness as a whole. For the purpose of weighing one good against another and choosing between them in cases of collision, it may often have to attempt a relatively complete abstraction of one aspect from another; but it does not pronounce that any aspect has exclusive value, or that the value of one aspect is to be estimated entirely without reference to the others, or that *the good* can be conceived of under any one of them. The man is Reason, Feeling, Will; and the ideal state for man is an ideal state of all three elements in his nature in their ideal relation to one another.

At this point it is probable that the reader who is inclined to utilitarian ways of thinking will be disposed to ask 'How do you know that knowledge is good, or (if you like so to express it) that the pleasures attending its pursuit and attainment are intrinsically superior to those of eating and drinking?' The answer must be, 'I do as a matter of fact so judge: I judge it immediately, and, so far, *a priori*: my Reason so pronounces: judgements of value are ultimate, and no ethical position, utilitarian or other, can rest on anything but judgements of value.' What is this, the reader is likely to exclaim, but sheer Intuitionism? How far

I am prepared to accept this identification will appear from the next chapter[1].

[1] The logical contradiction involved in Egoism has been powerfully argued by von Hartmann in his criticism of Nietzsche and Max Stirner (*Ethische Studien*, pp. 33-90). More recently Mr. Moore has incisively expressed the difficulty as follows: 'What Egoism holds, therefore, is that *each* man's happiness is the sole good—that a number of different things are *each* of them the only good thing there is—an absolute contradiction! No more complete and thorough refutation of any theory could be desired. Yet Professor Sidgwick holds that Egoism is rational,' a conclusion which he proceeds to characterize as 'absurd' (*Principia Ethica*, 1903, p. 99). I should agree with him that the position is self-contradictory in a sense in which universalistic Hedonism is not, and that with all his subtlety Sidgwick failed altogether to escape what was really an inconsistency in thought, even if he escaped an actual or formal contradiction. But to point out this logical contradiction does not seem to me quite so easy and final a way of refuting Sidgwick's position as it does to Mr. Moore for these reasons: (1) The Egoist with whom Professor Sidgwick is arguing would probably not accept Mr. Moore's (and my own) conception of an absolute objective good, though I should admit and have contended in this chapter that if he fully thought out what is implied in his own contention that his conduct is 'reasonable' he would be led to that conception. (2) Sidgwick only admitted that the Egoist was reasonable from one point of view—reasonable as far as he goes, i. e. when he refuses to ask whether his judgements are consistent with what he cannot help recognizing as the rational judgements of other men, and limits himself to asking whether he can make his own judgements consistent with themselves from his own point of view. No doubt Sidgwick ought to have gone on to admit that this imperfectly reasonable point of view was not really reasonable at all, and to some extent he has done this in his last Edition. And (3) after all, even if we admit that the Egoist is unreasonable, there remains the question 'Why should he care to be reasonable?' It was largely the difficulty of answering this question on universalistic Hedonist principles which drove Professor Sidgwick to admit a 'dualism of the Practical Reason,' and I am not sure that the question has been very satisfactorily answered by Mr. Moore who, though he is no Hedonist, appears to be unwilling to give the good will the highest place in his scale of goods.

CHAPTER IV

INTUITIONISM

I

By Intuitionism is usually understood the theory that actions are pronounced right or wrong *a priori* without reference to their consequences. According to one view it is supposed that Conscience, or whatever else the moral faculty may be called, pronounces on the morality of particular courses of conduct at the moment of action. This form of the doctrine has been styled by Professor Sidgwick unphilosophical Intuitionism, while he gives the name philosophical Intuitionism to the doctrine that what is intuitively judged to be right or wrong is always some general rule of conduct, from which the morality or immorality of this or that particular course of action must be deduced. According to the first view, Conscience is an ever-present dictator issuing detailed injunctions to meet particular cases as they arise: according to the second, Conscience is a legislator, whose enactments have to be applied to particular cases by the same intellectual process as is employed by a judge in administering an act of Parliament[1]. Intuitionists

[1] It is probable that many 'Intuitionists' would hold a position midway between these extreme views. They would hold that some rules are intuitively discerned to be of absolute obligation, while in other cases the decision must be left to the intuitive judgement of the moment. It may be asked where we are to find examples of the Intuitionist presupposed by the Utilitarian polemics. To a large extent no doubt he is a man of straw set up to be knocked down again. It will generally be found that most of the writers usually associated with the name make larger admissions than the popular exponents or assailants of this view recognize as to the necessity of considering consequences and the paramount duty of promoting the general good properly understood. But it cannot be denied that Bishop Butler (especially in the *Dissertation of Virtue*) and Reid have approximated to this position. The writer who seems specially to have introduced the term 'intui-

may further be divided into two classes according to the view which they take as to the nature of the faculty by which these *a priori* judgements are pronounced. By some Intuitionists this faculty is supposed to be Reason, by others a 'Moral Sense.' But the nature of the faculty involved in our moral judgements is one which can best be discussed when we have answered the easier preliminary question—'Do we in practice, or can we reasonably, pronounce actions to be right or wrong without regard to their consequences, in so far as such consequences can be foreseen?'

The belief described as unphilosophical Intuitionism in its wildest form is one which can hardly claim serious refutation. If it is supposed that the injunctions of the moral faculty are so wholly arbitrary that they proceed upon no general or rational principle whatever, if it is supposed that I may to-day in one set of circumstances feel bound by an inexplicable impulse within me to act in one way, while to-morrow I may be directed or direct myself to act differently under circumstances in no way distinguishable from the former, then moral judgements are reduced to an arbitrary caprice which is scarcely compatible with the belief in any objective standard of duty; for it will hardly be denied that, if right and wrong are not the same for the same individual on different but precisely similar occasions, they can still less be the same for different persons, and all idea of an objective moral law disappears. It may of course be alleged that the circumstances of no two acts are precisely alike, but they may certainly be alike in all relevant respects. If it be said that Conscience will vary its judgement in accordance with the circumstances of the case, and that other men's Consciences in proportion to their enlightenment will always pronounce the same judgements under

tion' as the note of a School is Richard Price, but that writer's admissions are so ample that he ends by virtually resolving all duties into Benevolence, understood in a non-hedonistic sense, and Justice. His *Review of the principal Questions and Difficulties in Morals* (1769) I regard as the best work published on Ethics till quite recent times. It contains the gist of the Kantian doctrine without Kant's confusions. In this chapter it must be understood that I am criticizing a type of opinion and not any particular writer.

similar circumstances, there must be some rule or principle by which it must be possible to distinguish between circumstances which do and circumstances which do not alter our duty, however little this rule or principle may be present in an abstract form to the moral consciousness of the individual. Granted, therefore, that the moral judgements may as a matter of psychological fact reveal themselves first and most clearly in particular cases (just as we pronounce judgements about particular spaces and distances long before we have consciously put geometrical principles into the form of general axioms), it must still, it would seem, be possible by analysis of our particular moral judgements to discover the general principles upon which they proceed. Analytical thought and philosophical language may be inadequate for the accurate expression of the delicate shades and gradations of circumstance upon which, in complicated cases, our moral judgements actually depend; but some approximation to this, some rough rules or principles of ethical judgement, ought, one would think, to be capable of being elicited from a wide comparative survey of one's own and other people's actual judgements. If this be denied, moral instruction must be treated as absolutely impossible. Now it may be quite true that in many ways 'example is better than precept,' not only on account of its emotional effect but even on account of the intellectual illumination supplied by a good man's conduct in presence of varying practical difficulties. It is true that the contemplation in actual fact or in recorded history of a good life may suggest ideals which no mere system of precepts, abstracted from particular applications, can adequately embody. A general rule is often best embodied in a concrete, typical case. The parable of the Good Samaritan has taught the true meaning of Charity more clearly as well as more persuasively than any direct precept that could be culled from the writings of Seneca or even from the Sermon on the Mount. But still there is a consensus among reasonable men that moral instruction of some kind—however vague, general, and inadequate to the complexities of actual life—is possible, desirable, and necessary. We do not say to a child who asks whether he may pick a flower in somebody else's garden, 'My good child, that depends

entirely upon the circumstances of the particular case: to lay down any general rule on the subject would be a piece of unwarrantable dogmatism on my part: consult your own Conscience, as each case arises, and all will be well.' On the contrary, we say at once: 'You must not pick the flower: *because* that would be stealing, and stealing is wrong.' Make any reserves you please as to the inadequacy of the rule, its want of definiteness, its inability to meet many problems of life, the necessity for exceptions and the like; yet it must be admitted that if there be any one point about Morality as to which there is a consensus alike among all plain men and nearly all Philosophers[1] it is surely this—that general rules of conduct do exist. Morality cannot be reduced to copy-book headings, but copy-book headings we do and must have. Now, in proportion as all this is admitted, unphilosophical Intuitionism tends to pass into the philosophical variety of the Intuitionist creed and may be subjected to the same criticism.

The strongest part of Sidgwick's great work consists in its analysis of common-sense Morality. The loose statements of Intuitionists as to the clearness, certainty, adequacy, and self-evidence of the ordinarily received rules of conduct have never been subjected to so searching, so exhaustive, and so illuminating an examination. That task has been done once for all, and need not in detail be done over again. It will be enough in this place to exhibit in the barest outline the difficulties which this mode of ethical thought has to confront:—

(i) Granted the existence of intuitive tendencies to approve action of particular kinds, we may still ask why we should trust to blind unreasoning impulses which refuse to give any rational account of themselves. Granted the existence of such judgements as a matter of psychological fact, whence comes their validity? If it be said 'they are deliverances of moral Reason,' we may ask whether it can be really rational to act without some consideration of consequences? What does rational conduct mean but acting with a clear conception of our ultimate

[1] Some of Mr. Bradley's utterances in *Ethical Studies* and elsewhere seem to constitute the only exception known to me. This position will be further discussed in the last chapter of this work.

purpose or aim, and taking the means which seem best adapted to attain that end? 'Look before you leap' seems to be one of the clearest of all practical axioms: to act in obedience to every subjective impulse, even if it be *prima facie* an impulse arising from the higher part of our nature, would seem very like adopting as our maxim 'Leap before you look.' Of course there may be circumstances in which we have to leap after a very hurried and imperfect survey of the situation under penalty of being too late to leap at all, but some looking before leaping is as necessary in the most unexpected and agonizing crisis of the battle-field or the hunting field as in the leisured pomp and circumstance of formal athletic sports.

(ii) The moral notions which have seemed equally innate, self-evident, and authoritative to those who held them have varied enormously with different races, different ages, different individuals—even with the same individuals at different periods of life. It will be unnecessary to illustrate at length the variations of moral sentiment which have formed the main stock-in-trade of utilitarian writers from the days of John Locke to those of Herbert Spencer. We have been taught to honour our fathers and mothers: there have been races which deemed it sacred duty to eat them. Average Greek public opinion looked with favour, or at least indulgence, upon acts which are crimes in most civilized modern communities. Pious and educated Puritans could see no harm in kidnapping negroes or shooting Irishmen. The eminent evangelical clergyman John Newton pronounced the hours which he passed in the captain's cabin of a slaver, separated by a plank or two from a squalid mass of human misery of which he was the cause, to have been sweeter hours of divine communion than he had ever elsewhere known. Some virtues seem to be of very late development even among civilized races—religious toleration, for instance, and humanity towards animals. And so on, and so on.

To beginners in Moral Philosophy these objections to Intuitionism will usually present themselves as the strongest and most unanswerable. In truth perhaps they are the weakest. Neither the slow development of the moral faculty nor its unequal development in different individuals at the same level

of social culture forms any objection to the *a priori* character of moral judgements. We do not doubt either the axioms of Mathematics or the rules of reasoning, because some savages cannot count more than five[1], or because some highly educated classical scholars are incapable of understanding the fifth proposition of Euclid's first book. Some of us will even refuse to allow our belief in the objectivity of aesthetic judgements to be shaken because a Zulu will hold a picture upside down, because an uneducated bargee will often prefer some gaudy sign-board to an old Master, because the taste which pronounced Queen's College the only really satisfactory piece of Oxford architecture does not commend itself to the twentieth century, or because even among the most cultivated art critics of the present day there exist considerable differences of opinion. Intuitionists have no doubt shown a tendency to claim infallibility as well as authority for the moral judgements of the individual: but such a claim is by no means necessary to the extremest view of the arbitrary, unconsequential, isolated character of moral judgements. We may admit the validity of the principles of reasoning and of the axioms of Mathematics, although many men reason badly, and some cannot even count. Men's moral judgements may be intuitive, but they need not be infallible. Self-evident truths are not truths which are evident to everybody. There are degrees of moral illumination just as there are degrees of musical sensibility or of mathematical acuteness. Taken by themselves, the variations of moral judgement form a less serious objection to the intuitional mode of thought than those which follow, although it may be certainly contended that Intuitionism of the cruder kind cannot adequately account for these variations.

(iii) Even when a certain intuition is actually found in all or most men of a certain race and age, the moral rule which it enjoins usually turns out upon examination to be incapable of exact definition. All, or nearly all, detailed moral rules have some exceptions, except indeed when the rule laid down tacitly excludes such exceptional cases. The rule 'Thou shalt do no

[1] Assuming such to be the fact, as is sometimes alleged, though the truth may be that they have no words or other signs for higher numbers.

murder' presents itself no doubt at first sight as a moral rule admitting of no exception; but that is only because murder means 'killing except under those exceptional circumstances under which it is right to kill.' Now, even where there seems to be the fullest agreement, at least among men of developed moral nature, as to the main rules, it is frequently found to disappear as soon as we come to discuss the exceptions; while even the same individual will often find that at this point his intuitions become indistinct or fail him altogether. And in practice it will nearly always turn out that the exception has been introduced from some consideration of consequences. Those who are most positive in maintaining a particular moral rule to be of self-evident and universal obligation independently of consequences, will generally shrink from applying it in certain extreme cases. Set forth to the Intuitionist in sufficient detail the appalling consequences of applying his rule, pile up the agony sufficiently, and there will almost always come a point at which he begins to be doubtful as to whether the rule applies, and a further point at which he is certain that it does not. 'Thou shalt do no murder'; but most men will admit that there are exceptional cases in which killing is no murder, and perhaps a very large majority would be got to declare that their intuitions were clear in excepting self-defence, war or at least lawful war, and judicial execution. But ask at what point killing in self-defence becomes lawful, what constitutes war or what constitutes lawful war, for what offences we may lawfully inflict death, at what point it becomes the duty of the individual to refuse to take part in an unrighteous campaign or to carry out an iniquitous sentence—and we find ourselves once again in a chaos of uncertainties. And observe exactly the point of the uncertainty: the uncertainty lies exactly in this—that no clear intuitions are forthcoming as to the exact moment at which it begins to be legitimate to take account of consequences. 'Thou shalt not kill except in self-defence, or by judicial sentence.' So much may perhaps be pronounced to be self-evident without reference to consequences. But if the established government absolutely refuses to protect person, property, or Morality, shall we never reach

a state of anarchy such as will warrant the intervention of an extra-legal committee of public safety or vigilance association, and the summary execution of its sentences? If only the foreseen consequences are bad enough, no one but an advocate of absolute non-resistance will fail to relax his severity, and the advocate of unlimited non-resistance is certainly not in a position to claim any general consensus in his favour. Now, if there be any point at which an apparent intuition has to give way before clearly foreseen ill consequences, how can we logically say that it can *ever* be right to exclude consideration of consequences? We must at least examine the probable consequences of an act sufficiently to feel reasonably sure that it will have none of those extreme results which, it is admitted, would have the effect of suspending the moral rule upon which it is proposed to act. The only people who have really carried out the doctrine that apparently self-evident moral rules cannot be modified by the consequences, however socially disastrous, of disobeying them to anything like its logical results, are those who (like Count Leo Tolstoi) preach the doctrine of unlimited submission to force, unlimited giving to mendicants and the like. And here common-sense Intuitionism decidedly declines to follow.

(iv) The above considerations may probably lead on to the reflection that after all some reference to consequences is really included in every moral rule. Indeed, you cannot really distinguish an act from its present or foreseeable consequences. The consequences, in so far as they can be foreseen, are actually part of the act. You cannot carry out any rule whatever without *some* consideration of consequences. You cannot obey the rule of Benevolence without asking whether giving money in the street really is Benevolence; and that depends upon whether it will actually have the effect of doing ultimate good to those to whom you give and others who may be affected by the expectation of similar assistance which your act creates. You cannot obey the command 'Thou shalt not kill' without considering whether the trigger that you pull will actually discharge a bullet, how far the bullet is likely to travel, what it will meet with on the way, and (if it is likely to hit any one)

whether that person is on the point of shooting somebody else, or is a peaceable and inoffensive fellow-citizen. What would be the meaning of asking whether drunkenness would be wrong if it did not make a man incoherent in his talk, irrational in his judgements, unsteady in his gait, and irresponsible in his behaviour? Drunkenness taken apart from *all* its consequences would not be drunkenness. Once admit that consequences must be considered at all, and it is arbitrary to stop at any particular point in the calculus of social effects. You are not really in a position to pronounce upon the morality of the act until you have the completest view that circumstances enable you to take of the whole train of events which will be started by your contemplated volition. Until you have formed that estimate of consequences, you do not really know what you are doing: at any point in the vast orbit of changes which spreads from every human action, like the widening ripple that radiates from a stone dropped into smooth water, it is always theoretically possible that some circumstance may be discovered which may remove the case from the category to which your moral rule refers.

No doubt in practice it is often imperative that we should act without this elaborate investigation: but the very enquiry 'how long ought I to deliberate before I act?' is precisely one of those questions upon which it is impossible to discover any intuitive rule containing no reference to the probable consequences—the consequences, that is to say, on the one hand of deliberating too much, and on the other of not deliberating enough. If there are cases in which our moral consciousness clearly bids us do something or other at once without thinking of consequences, it will be found that these cases are precisely those in which excessive deliberation would be likely to lead to harmful results. To stay and reflect upon all the consequences which might be expected to flow from obeying or resisting the impulse to plunge into the water after a drowning man would very rapidly place the former alternative out of the question; to encourage the habit of prolonged deliberation in such cases would be to make gallant attempts at rescues few, and successful rescues fewer. It is therefore considered enough to justify the attempt that

a man knows he is a good swimmer, that the sea is not exceptionally rough, and that it is not certain that the attempt will fail. There are, of course, scores of cases in which it is right to act on short deliberation: but it will probably be found, on analysis, that it is some consequence of allowing people to deliberate upon which the judgement is ultimately based. It is a commonplace of utilitarian Ethics that many things must be avoided altogether which might in exceptional cases have good effects just because exceptions, if admitted at all, would have a tendency to become too numerous[1].

(v) Still more obviously does the existence of contradictory moral intuitions compel an appeal to consequences. When the duty of Benevolence collides with the duty of Veracity, or the claim of one individual to immediate relief with the duty of doing what is best for society on the whole, how shall we determine which rule is to take precedence? It is no use to say with Dr. Martineau 'Act in obedience to the highest motive[2]'; for it is impossible to pronounce one motive higher than another in the abstract, without reference to circumstances. If I were

[1] It is therefore quite reasonable to hold that some acts may properly be forbidden by Morality, just as others are forbidden by law, because (though often harmless) there is a probable balance of harm in allowing the practice at all. Law forbids my crossing the line except by the bridge (although the practice is quite safe for an able-bodied man in full possession of all his faculties) because my indulging in it has a tendency to encourage imitation in the feeble, the elderly, and the deaf, who are likely to be run over. It is quite reasonable to urge that even moderate gambling *ought* to be forbidden by public opinion on much the same grounds. Until public opinion has forbidden it, I am not, indeed, at liberty to treat the man who plays whist for sixpences as a moral offender. But, if I think that society would do well to adopt as its rule the total condemnation of gambling, it is my duty under ordinary circumstances to abstain from it myself, and to do what in me lies (short of censoriously condemning individuals who differ from me) to bring about the adoption of this rule. Those who will not under any possible circumstances admit that 'abusus tollit usum' would find it difficult to justify a whole host of accepted moral rules which rest on this principle. The whole social code which restricts the time, place, and circumstances of social intercourse between the sexes is based on this principle. Acts in themselves harmless are forbidden altogether because experience shows that they are liable to lead to bad consequences in some cases.

[2] This doctrine is developed in the first part of the second volume of *Types of Ethical Theory*.

to pronounce Veracity invariably a higher motive than Benevolence, I could never tell a lie or employ a detective to tell one for me, to avoid the extremest social disaster. If, on the other hand, I pronounce Benevolence higher than Veracity and every other possible motive, I have practically adopted the utilitarian principle, and Veracity would have always to give way to Benevolence, wherever there was the slightest collision between them. But neither solution of the problem seems to satisfy the demands of our moral consciousness. The first view strikes us as too rigorous, the last as too lax. What our actual moral judgement seems to say is, that in such collisions it is the amount of the unveracity or the amount of the inhumanity that will have to determine which rule is to give way. And this cannot be ascertained without a calculation of consequences. If once it be admitted that under any possible combination of circumstances I may tell a lie (however strongly one may feel the practical inexpediency of entering upon such a calculation in all ordinary cases), I must still feel bound to examine the circumstances sufficiently to be pretty sure that there is no probability of this turning out to be one of those extreme or exceptional cases in which the lie would be warranted. In general, of course, this hasty survey of the consequences is so instantaneously performed as to escape notice altogether. A truthful man acts at once on the general rule unless he detects something in the circumstances which seems to call for further consideration.

(vi) While the foregoing objections may be urged against many of the alleged intuitions to which intuitional Moralists appeal, there are some which do submit to the tests which have been found fatal to the claim for absolute and final validity on the part of the rest. The axioms of Prudence, Rational Benevolence, and Equity do possess the clearness and definiteness and freedom from self-contradiction which other alleged intuitions so conspicuously lack. It does on reflection strike us as self-evident that I ought to promote my own good on the whole (where no one else's good is affected), that I ought to regard a larger good for society in general as of more intrinsic value than a smaller good, and that one man's good is (other

things being equal) of as much intrinsic value as any other man's. But these axioms, so far from throwing any doubt upon the truth of Utilitarianism, are precisely the maxims upon which Utilitarianism itself is founded for those who attempt to base the duty of promoting pleasure upon its intrinsic rightness or reasonableness. In the acceptance of those maxims as genuine moral axioms, Sidgwick has, as we have seen, laid the foundations for a reconciliation between Intuitionism and Utilitarianism. But the acceptance of these axioms does not make in favour of the kind of Intuitionism which it is the object of this chapter to examine; for these are precisely the axioms upon which Utilitarianism itself is based. Such intuitions do not forbid us—on the contrary they expressly require and compel us—to attend to the consequences of actions, and to make our judgement about them depend upon their tendency to promote a universal good.

II

It is perhaps unnecessary to multiply objections to that sort of Intuitionism which declares that certain rules of action are to be followed irrespectively of consequences. It is irrational to judge of the morality of an action without tracing its bearing upon human Well-being as a whole. We are compelled to accept the utilitarian formula in so far as it asserts that conduct is good or bad only in proportion as it tends to promote the Well-being of human society on the whole. But we have already seen reasons for rejecting the utilitarian identification of greatest good with greatest pleasure; and we have seen that in the judgements as to the value of different kinds of good we encounter *a priori* or immediate deliverances of the moral consciousness of precisely that kind to which the term Intuition is commonly applied. What then is the difference between the intuitions which we have rejected and the intuitions which we have felt ourselves compelled to accept? The intuitions of the Intuitionist are supposed to lay down invariable *rules* of conduct; the *a priori* or immediate judgements which we have admitted relate to *ends*, to the relative value of different elements in human Well-being or εὐδαιμονία. In other words the intuitions

of the Intuitionist disregard consequences; ours relate precisely to the value of different kinds of consequence. The Intuitionist pronounces intuitive judgement upon *acts*; our intuitions relate to *ends*; his take the form 'this is right,' ours always the form 'this is good.'

A few illustrations will make the contrast plain. The old intuitive rule of Veracity is supposed to say, 'Do not lie under any circumstances whatever': our judgement of value gives us only 'Truth-speaking is good; lying is bad.' And the moment the intuitive or *a priori* truth is put in this new form, the irrationality and unworkableness of the old intuitional system disappears. We are not forbidden to calculate consequences. Certainly we must trace the bearing of an act upon universal Well-being; but in our εὐδαιμονία truth-speaking, or rather the truth-speaking and truth-loving character, finds a place. Supposing the speaking of the truth will in this particular case involve such and such evils, the question is 'Which is the worse—these evils or the evil involved in the lie; so much suffering, and suffering caused by my voluntary act, or so much untruthfulness?' It is impossible, of course, to set forth in detail all the circumstances upon which a right decision of such cases may depend. But it would be generally agreed that to tell a lie to save somebody from hearing an unpleasant remark, or to save him from some trifling injury to his pride or self-esteem, would be to choose the greater of two evils instead of the less. On the other hand, to save a friend's life at the cost of concealing bad news by a lie would be a less evil than the voluntary causing of his death by speaking the truth. Of course, if any one disputes such a view of the case, we have nothing to say. As in all questions of ultimate ends, argument is impossible: but so in this particular case the vast majority of conscientious people judge and act. And be it observed that on this principle our moral judgements can never contradict one another. It remains true that truth is good, and speaking an untruth an evil; but like other goods, truth may have to give way to greater goods; lying is always an evil, but it may be the less of two evils. It is evil even when the justification for the lie is palpable and incontestable. Where the circumstances are such that the isolated act does not

evidence or encourage an untruthful habit or character, the evil may be very small; but we cannot always secure that the evil shall be a small one. Lying in detectives is necessary and right, but, like some other professional duties, it may not always be good for the character of the person who practises it. It is often necessary to do things which are right for *us*, but which are liable to be imitated by those for whom they are wrong. If the evil of the anticipated imitation be great enough, this may no doubt be a sufficient reason for abstinence, but no sensible man would forbid a father to smoke because the example may fire his youthful son with the ambition to do likewise.

The general result then of our discussion, taken in connexion with preceding chapters, is that the true criterion of Morality is the tendency of an act to promote a Well-being or *εὐδαιμονία* which includes many other good things besides pleasure, among which Virtue is the greatest. The value of these elements in human life is determined by the Practical Reason intuitively, immediately, or (if we like to say so) *a priori*[1] All moral judgements are ultimately judgements as to the intrinsic worth or value of some element in consciousness or life.

And we may go one step further than this in recognition of the partial truth of Intuitionism. The great objection in many minds to the utilitarian view of Ethics is the element of calculation which it involves. When this objection is made into a plea for acting without regard to consequences, it is (as I have endeavoured to show) completely irrational. But all the same the directness and immediacy which appear to characterize our clearest moral perceptions do seem at first sight an objection to the doctrine that I cannot decide whether a thing is right or wrong until I have worked out all its probable consequences upon so remote and intangible a thing as universal Well-being. And the

[1] I wish for the present to avoid as far as possible metaphysical discussion, and therefore content myself with saying that by *a priori* I mean merely that the judgement is *immediate*—not obtained by inference or deduction from something else in the way in which the Utilitarian supposes his judgements to be deductions from rules got by generalization from experience (though, as I have explained, he always assumes the ultimate major premiss 'Pleasure is good'). That in another sense judgements of value are not independent of experience, I shall hereafter strongly insist, especially in the next chapter.

difficulty is not fully met by insisting on the fact that on most of the ethical difficulties of common life the moral consciousness of the community has already laid down rules which the individual has only to apply to the matter in hand. For there are no moral judgements which probably strike those who make them as more authoritative and self-evident than those by which a certain act is judged to be wrong in spite of an overwhelming weight of custom and tradition. Such a judgement was pronounced, for instance, when a solitary monk declared that the gladiatorial combat was a barbarous brutality, though the tradition of ages and a whole circus-full of professedly Christian spectators pronounced it right, and by a public protest, which cost him his life, sealed the doom of the whole institution. And there is no reason why we should not fully recognize the validity of such judgements without any surrender of the principles which we have adopted. For this indefinable Well-being or *εὐδαιμονία*, which our moral Reason pronounces to be the ultimate end of all human conduct, is itself made up of elements of consciousness—feelings, volitions, emotions, thoughts, activities—each of which is itself an object of moral valuation. If these elements were not each of them by itself[1] the object of a judgement of value, there could be no judgement of value upon the whole. Every one would recognize this as regards acts which cause immediate pleasure or pain. Nobody supposes that, when I see a man sticking a knife into another, it is necessary for me to calculate the effect of the act upon the lives of all human beings, present and future, before I condemn the proceeding. I say at once, 'This pain is bad: therefore the infliction of it is wrong'; and, if I am not a Hedonist, I may add, 'the character or disposition which this act shows is worse than the pain which it causes.' And it is equally so in many cases where the act has no such immediate and obvious bearing upon the welfare of human society. That a rational being should use his intellect to make things appear to his brother man otherwise than as they are strikes me at once

[1] I speak of course in a rough and relative sense. We could form no judgement upon the worth of an act or a state of mind without some general knowledge of its relation to life as a whole. The illustrations will, I trust, sufficiently explain my meaning.

as irrational and evil. I do not want to trace out all the effects of lying upon human society before I say, 'this is a lie and therefore bad.' It is not the existence or even the relative and partial validity of such judgements that is disputed, so much as their finality. In many cases it is practically apparent at the first glance that no possible circumstances could make this act—the cutting or the lying—result in an overplus of good to human society. In many more cases there is a great improbability that any circumstance at present unknown to me will disclose a prospect of beneficial consequences which would reverse my *prima facie* judgement. But, unless I know all the circumstances, it is always *possible* that further knowledge might reveal such a tendency. The man sticking a knife into his fellow with apparently heartless brutality may turn out to be a surgeon performing a salutary operation. The lie which I put down to mere indifference to truth may turn out to be part of a detective's scheme for the capture of a murderer or the protection of an innocent man. It is not always practically necessary to look to the ultimate end before we judge, and act upon our judgement: but, until we have done so, we are never sure that we have reached one of those ultimate moral judgements which represent an immediate deliverance of Reason, and which no further knowledge of facts and no demonstration of consequences can possibly shake. There would be little objection to the claims which the Intuitionist makes for his intuitions, if only he would admit that they are subject to appeal, though it is only an appeal to the same tribunal which pronounced the original judgements—an appeal (to borrow an old legal phrase) *a conscientia male informata ad conscientiam melius informandam.* So long as the intuitive judgement runs in the form, 'This is right,' it is always liable to be reversed on a wider survey of consequences. If it be turned into the form, 'This is good,' it cannot possibly be reversed (supposing that the man's ethical ideal be a true one), though the resulting duty may appear different when this isolated judgement is brought into comparison with other moral judgements affirming the superior goodness of some other end [1]. In Morality, as in other matters,

[1] This point has been well put by Dr. McTaggart. 'But is a moral

our judgements require to be correlated and corrected by reference to one another. Only the judgements that are based upon complete knowledge are final. The ideal moral judgement implies a conception of the ideal good for society as a whole, but we could have no ideal of what is good for society as a whole unless we had a power of pronouncing that this or that particular moment of conscious life is good or bad. Our conception of the moral ideal as a whole is built up out of particular judgements of value, though particular judgements of value have to be progressively corrected by our growing conception of the moral ideal as a whole, just as our conception of the laws of nature is built up out of particular perceptions, though when that knowledge is once attained it reacts upon and alters the perceptions themselves.

And by expressing the moral judgement as a judgement of value we get this further advantage. We emphasize the fact which eudaemonistic systems of Ethics are apt to overlook—that acts are the objects of moral judgements as well as consequences. Because no act can be good or bad without reference to consequences, it does not follow that its morality depends wholly upon those consequences. To the Hedonist, of course, such a distinction would be meaningless. For him nothing about an act is of any value or importance besides the consequences. Whether a poor family economize by infanticide or by curtailing their expenditure is simply a question of profit and loss. If the sum

criterion,' he asks, 'wanted at all? It might be maintained that it was not. It would only be wanted, it might be said, if we decided our actions by general rules, which we do not. Our moral action depends on particular judgements that A is better than B, which we recognize with comparative immediacy, in the same way that we recognize that one plate is hotter than another, or one picture more beautiful than another. It is on these particular intuitive judgements of value, and not on general rules, that our moral action is based.

'This seems to me a dangerous exaggeration of an important truth. It is quite true that, if we did not begin with such judgements, we should have neither morality nor ethics. But it is equally true that we should have neither morality nor ethics if we stopped, where we must begin, with these judgements, and treated them as decisive and closing discussion. For our moral judgements are hopelessly contradictory of one another.' (*Studies in Hegelian Cosmology*, p. 97.)

of pleasure would be equal in the two cases, it would be a matter of perfect indifference by which machinery the requisite correspondence between food and eaters shall be effected. The inhumanity of the act, the want of self-control which it implies, the temper or character which it expresses and fosters are matters of no importance except in so far as they may result upon the whole in an actual diminution of pleasure or increase of suffering. But, when once it is admitted that the end includes a certain ideal of human character, then the deliberate extinction of children deliberately brought into the world with the intention of so disposing of them will seem a vastly greater evil, to the individuals concerned and to the society which tolerates their conduct, than much poverty with all its physical hardships and privations.

From this non-hedonistic point of view we can no longer recognize an absolute distinction between means and ends. Some means may no doubt have no value beyond that of conducing to a further end; but many, nay most, of the acts which do conduce to further ends have a value (positive or negative) of their own; and this value must be taken into account in estimating the rightness or wrongness of the acts.

It is on this principle that we must deal with most of the *prima facie* collisions between our ordinary moral judgements and the results of eudaemonistic calculation. Nothing but consciousness has value, but volitions and desires, emotions and aspirations and imaginations, are elements in all our consciousness as well as mere pleasures and pains. There are acts so intrinsically repulsive that it strikes us as, on the face of it, impossible that any pleasure which they might yield could be worth the evil which they involve. In this way most people would condemn without further examination proposals for the abolition of marriage or the permission of promiscuous infanticide. But still even in such cases it is not speculatively admissible to say, 'we will not look at the consequences.' Practically, of course, it may often be right to refuse to argue some proposed moral innovation: that must depend upon circumstances. But, if we do argue, if we do want speculatively to get to the bottom of an ethical question, we are bound to look at all the consequences, and

pronounce whether, given such and such probable results, they are worth the evil involved in the means taken to gain them. In many cases—where the consequence on the strength of which it is proposed to do some questionable act is not some remote effect but some immediate pleasure—it is convenient to discuss the question as one of higher *versus* lower pleasure, though in strictness this means, according to our view, that the getting pleasure from one source is better than getting it from another, that one kind of pleasant consciousness is intrinsically better than another, though not more pleasant. And, if we treat one pleasure as intrinsically better than another, there is no logical objection to our regarding some pleasures (i. e. the getting pleasure from some things) as intrinsically bad.

It is clear to my mind that there do exist pleasures which are intrinsically bad. On strictly hedonistic principles I fail to understand why we should object to the Spanish or Southern-French bull-fight, to the German students' face-slashing duels, to the coursing and pigeon-shooting which the higher public opinion is beginning to condemn among ourselves, to the wild-beast fights of the Roman amphitheatre, or perhaps even to the gladiatorial combats themselves, at least if the gladiators were justly condemned criminals. Hedonism is not bound to object to all infliction of pain, but only to insist that the pain inflicted shall yield a sufficient overplus of pleasure on the whole. There is no more difficult ethical question than the question of the negative value to be attributed to pain as compared with the positive value to be attributed to pleasure. There is no question assuredly upon which people's actual judgements would differ more. Which would you rather have—some particularly longed for treat, the holiday or the travel that you have set your heart upon + a painful operation without chloroform, or no treat and no operation? Different men would answer such questions very differently[1]. But, to return to our bull-fight, upon any rational

[1] It is an extremely difficult question to say how far in such matters Hedonism would be bound to accept the verdict of the persons themselves. For we often deceive ourselves as to the pleasurableness of pleasures not immediately present, even when we have some experience to go upon, and yet such false estimates are causes of further pleasures and pains—pleasures

or intelligible view of the comparative values of pleasure and pain, the intense pleasure which such spectacles give to thousands of beholders must surely outweigh the pain inflicted on a few dozen animals or even a few dozen criminals. If ten thousand spectators would not be sufficient to readjust the balance, suppose them multiplied tenfold or one-hundredfold. A humane man would condemn the spectacle all the same. He will pronounce such pleasures of inhumanity bad, quite apart from the somewhat dubious calculation that the encouragement of inhumanity in one direction tends to callousness in another. Experience does not seem to show that persons habituated to the infliction of pain in one direction sanctioned by custom are less humane than other men in other directions. It is possible to question the morality of many forms of sport without accusing the average country gentleman of exceptional inhumanity, or doubting the sincerity of the indignation with which he sends a labourer's boy to prison for setting his dog at the domestic cat. Another good instance of intrinsically bad pleasures is supplied by drunkenness. The pleasures of drunkenness strike the healthily constituted mind as intrinsically degrading and disgusting, though it is probable that occasional acts of drunkenness are physically less injurious than a course of ordinary dinner-parties; and we should think the man's conduct in getting drunk worse instead of better if he had carefully taken precautions which would prevent the possibility of his doing mischief or causing annoyance to others while under the influence of his premeditated debauch. Of course in all such cases, where we pronounce a particular kind of pleasure bad, we must remember what was said in dealing with the distinction between higher and lower pleasures. The pleasure taken by itself—in abstraction from the total content of the consciousness enjoying it—cannot possibly have anything bad about it. In the night all cows are black; when we have made abstraction of all that differentiates one pleasure from another, the abstract remainder must obviously be identical from a moral as from every other point of view. It is really the getting pleasure from such and such things that

or pains of expectation, imagination, or retrospect—which must themselves come into the calculus.

is pronounced bad in such cases. It is good to be pleased, but not at everything, or under all circumstances, or at all costs.

III

Our examination of the traditional Intuitionism has thus brought us round to the same position which we arrived at by a criticism of the traditional hedonistic Utilitarianism. We found that the Utilitarians were right in saying that actions are right or wrong according as they tend to promote or to diminish universal Well-being, but we found that they were wrong in thinking that the Well-being of a rational creature consists simply in pleasure, and pleasure measured quantitatively. We saw reason to believe that the very choice of the right and rational course for its own sake was itself a good and the greatest of all goods, and that it is impossible logically to establish the duty of preferring the general pleasure to our own without recognizing the intrinsic value of such a preference of universal good both for ourselves and for others. We saw further that besides this preference of the truly good in conduct or character there were many other elements in the ideal state of a human soul other than the Altruism of its volitions and the pleasantness of its sensations; and when we faced the question, how we know these things to be good in various degrees, we were obliged to answer 'We know it intuitively or immediately; we can give no reason why it should be so except that we see it so to be.' So far we were obliged to admit that the Intuitionists were right. We found, however, that the Intuitionists were mistaken in supposing that the moral Reason on which they rightly base our ethical judgements either lays down fixed and exceptionless laws of conduct, or issues isolated, arbitrary, disconnected decrees *pro re nata* without reference to probable results. We saw that fundamentally these moral judgements were judgements of value: they decide what is good, not immediately and directly what is right. Since *prima facie* it is always right to follow the good, these judgements may often in practice condemn this or that kind of conduct so emphatically that we feel sure that no calculation of consequences is likely to prevent our turning the judgement 'this is

good' into a judgement 'this is right': but we saw that theoretically no single judgement of value can form the basis of a rule of conduct which admits of no exceptions. For moral Reason bids us not only seek to realize the good but to realize as much good as possible, and (if I may anticipate a point which we have not yet established) to distribute that good justly or impartially between the various persons who may be affected by our actions. We have seen reason, while accepting the intuitional view of the imperativeness of duty and the supreme value of moral goodness, to hold that the law of duty itself requires us to consider the consequences of our actions and to seek to promote for all mankind a εὐδαιμονία or Well-being which shall include in itself all the various elements to which moral Reason ascribes value; and include them in such wise that each is accorded its due value and no more than that value. So far we have decided nothing as to what these elements are except that Virtue is the most important of them, that culture or knowledge is another, and that pleasure has a place among them, although some pleasures are bad and the relative value of others has to be determined by a non-hedonistic standard.

We have begun our study of Ethics with the question of the moral criterion. Logically it might seem that we should have discussed the theory of duty in general before attacking the question how we find out what particular acts or classes of acts are duties. I have adopted the former course because it seemed the best way of showing how impossible it is for the most thorough-going Utilitarian to avoid admitting that this simple, unanalysable notion of duty or the reasonable in conduct does exist, and of illustrating the impossibility of constructing a logically coherent system of Ethics without the assumption that the reasonableness of an act is a sufficient ground for its being done. Before we go further, however, it may be well to dwell at some greater length upon the nature of this fundamental idea; and the best way of doing so will be by a brief examination of the classical exposition of it contained in the system of Immanuel Kant.

CHAPTER V

THE CATEGORICAL IMPERATIVE

I

We have seen that there is implied in every ethical judgement the idea that there is something which is intrinsically good, which it is reasonable to do, which is right, which ought to be done. These different modes of expression I regard as alternative ways of expressing the same unanalysable idea which is involved in all ethical judgements—as much in the Utilitarian's judgement that he ought to promote the greatest happiness of the greatest number as in the Idealist's judgement 'I ought to aim at the greatest Virtue or Perfection for myself or for others.' If any one questions the existence of this idea of rightness, no argument can do more than remove some of the misconceptions which may prevent his explicitly recognizing what is really implied in the workings of his own mind. To attempt this task will be the object of the present chapter. If any one denies the authority or validity (as distinct from the existence) of this idea of duty, such a vindication of its validity as it is possible to give belongs to Metaphysic. The relation of Morals to Metaphysic is a subject on which something must be said hereafter: and yet all that even Metaphysic can do in this connexion is to develope the extravagant consequences in which a man becomes involved if he denies the validity of his own thought. To deny the deliverances of our own Reason is to deprive ourselves of any ground for believing in anything whatever. To admit that our Reason assures us that there are some things which it is right to do, and yet to ask why we should believe that those things ought to be done, is to ask why we should believe what we see to be true.

Sidgwick's account of this idea of duty is so clear and so entirely dissociated from any metaphysical assumptions which

to some minds might seem difficult or questionable, that I cannot do better than quote him at length :—

'It seems then that the notion of "ought" or "moral obligation" as used in our common moral judgements, does not merely import (1) that there exists in the mind of the person judging a specific emotion (whether complicated or not by sympathetic representation of similar emotions in other minds); nor (2) that certain rules of conduct are supported by penalties which will follow on their violation (whether such penalties result from the general liking or aversion felt for the conduct prescribed or forbidden, or from some other source). What then, it may be asked, does it import? What definition can we give of "ought," "right," and other terms expressing the same fundamental notion? To this I should answer that the notion which these terms have in common is too elementary to admit of any formal definition.... The notion we have been examining, as it now exists[1] in our thought, cannot be resolved into any more simple notions: it can only be made clearer by determining as precisely as possible its relation to other notions with which it is connected in ordinary thought, especially to those with which it is liable to be confounded.

'In performing this process it is important to note and distinguish two different implications with which the word "ought" is used; in the narrowest ethical sense what we judge "ought to be" done, is always thought capable of being brought about by the volition of any individual to whom the judgement applies. I cannot conceive that I "ought" to do anything which at the same time I judge that I cannot do. In a wider sense, however,—which cannot conveniently be discarded—I sometimes judge that I "ought" to know what a wiser man would know, or feel as a better man would feel, in my place, though I may know that I could not directly produce in myself such knowledge or feeling by any effort of will. In this case the word merely implies an ideal or pattern which I "ought"—in the stricter sense—to seek to imitate as far as possible. And this wider sense seems to be that in which the word is normally used in the precepts of Art generally, and in political judgements: when

[1] In the sentences omitted the writer explains that he does not exclude the possibility that the notion has been gradually developed.

I judge that the laws and constitution of my country "ought to be" other than they are, I do not of course imply that my own or any other individual's single volition can directly bring about the change. In either case, however, I imply that what ought to be is a possible object of knowledge: i.e. that what I judge ought to be must, unless I am in error, be similarly judged by all rational beings who judge truly of the matter [1].

'In referring such judgements to the "Reason," I do not mean to prejudge the question whether valid moral judgements are normally attained by a process of reasoning from universal principles or axioms, or by direct intuition of the particular duties of individuals. It is not uncommonly held that the moral faculty deals primarily with individual cases as they arise, applying directly to each case the general notion of duty, and deciding intuitively what ought to be done by this person in these particular circumstances. And I admit that on this view the apprehension of moral truth is more analogous to Sense-perception than to Rational Intuition (as commonly understood): and hence the term Moral Sense might seem more appropriate. But the term Sense suggests a capacity for feelings which may vary from *A* to *B* without either being in error, rather than a faculty of cognition: and it appears to me fundamentally important to avoid this suggestion. I have therefore thought it better to use the term Reason with the explanation above given, to denote the faculty of moral cognition [2].'

In claiming for the idea of duty not merely existence but authority, we have implied that the recognition that something is our duty supplies us with what we recognize upon reflection as a sufficient motive for doing it, a motive on which it is psychologically possible to act. The recognition of the thing as right is capable of producing an impulse to the doing of it. This impulse need not be strong enough to override other motives, nor need we enter here upon the question in what sense (if any) the choice between this motive of duty and other desires

[1] As a representation of the present writer's views this statement of the unanalysable character of the right must be taken to be qualified by what follows (below, pp. 137, 138) as to the relation between this notion and the wider concept of 'good.'

[2] *Methods of Ethics*, 6th ed., pp. 31–34.

or impulses must be held to depend upon the undetermined choice of the individual at the moment of action. It is enough for our present purpose that on reflection we recognize that the seeing a thing to be right is a reason for doing it, and that in some men at some moments the desire to do what is reasonable or right as such causes the action to be done.

Once again I may quote Sidgwick :—

'Further, when I speak of the cognition or judgement that "X ought to be done"—in the stricter ethical sense of the term ought—as a "dictate" or "precept" of reason to the persons to whom it relates; I imply that in rational beings as such this cognition gives an impulse or motive to action : though in human beings, of course, this is only one motive among others which are liable to conflict with it, and is not always—perhaps not usually—a predominant motive. In fact, this possible conflict of motives seems to be connoted by the term "dictate" or "imperative"; which describes the relation of Reason to mere inclinations or non-rational impulses by comparing it to the relation between the will of a superior and the wills of his subordinates. This conflict seems also to be implied in the terms "ought," "duty," "moral obligation," as used in ordinary moral discourse: and hence these terms cannot be applied to the actions of rational beings to whom we cannot attribute impulses conflicting with reason. We may, however, say of such beings that their actions are "reasonable," or (in an absolute sense) "right."

'I am aware that some persons will be disposed to answer all the preceding argument by a simple denial that they can find in their consciousness any such unconditional or categorical imperative as I have been trying to exhibit. If this is really the final result of self-examination in any case, there is no more to be said. I, at least, do not know how to impart the notion of moral obligation to any one who is entirely devoid of it. I think, however, that many of those who give this denial only mean to deny that they have any consciousness of moral obligation to actions without reference to their consequences; and would not really deny that they recognise some universal end or ends—whether it be the general happiness, or well-being otherwise understood—as that at which it is ultimately reasonable to aim. . . . But in this

view, as I have before said, the unconditional imperative plainly comes in as regards the end, which is—explicitly or implicitly—recognised as an end at which all men "ought" to aim; and it can hardly be denied that the recognition of an end as ultimately reasonable involves the recognition of an obligation to do such acts as most conduce to the end [1].'

These two positions (1) that the rightness of actions is perceived immediately by the Reason, (2) that this rightness ought to be and is capable of becoming a motive to the Will, are embodied by Kant in the two famous phrases, the categorical imperative and the autonomy of the will. Duty is a categorical imperative because when a thing is seen to be right, we feel commanded to do it categorically, absolutely, as a means to no end beyond itself. If duty meant merely 'Do this if you want to be happy, or to be perfect, or to go to heaven,' it would be merely a hypothetical imperative: its obligation would depend on our happening to desire the end to which we saw the action in question to be a means. As it is, we feel that the rightness of doing what we see to be our duty is in no way dependent on the presence or absence of any desire or inclination towards what is commanded. It is true that the action cannot be done unless there is an impulse to do what is right or reasonable on our part, but such a desire may be created by the Reason which recognizes the rightness: we desire to do the act commanded (in so far as we do desire it) because it is commanded; we do not judge that we are commanded to do the act simply because we chance to desire it [2]. When then we do a thing because it is right, the will

[1] *Methods of Ethics*, 6th ed., pp. 34–5.

[2] It was partly to avoid this implication that Kant refused to speak of a *desire* to do one's duty, and partly because, as pointed out below, he erroneously assumed that every desire was a desire for pleasure. He therefore spoke of the 'interest' of Reason in the Moral Law or 'respect' for the Moral Law as the subjective motive of right conduct. But in his eagerness to assert that Reason immediately moves the will, he has at times the appearance of forgetting (what Aristotle urges against Plato) that bare thought does not initiate action (διάνοια αὐτὴ οὐδὲν κινεῖ): that moral choice (προαίρεσις) involves a desire (ὄρεξις) for the end as well as the intellectual perception that an act will promote the end. As von Hartmann puts it, 'Das Pflichtgefühl ist selbst eine Neigung' (*Das sittl. Bewusstsein*, p. 254). Moreover, this habit of speaking as if Reason stepped in (so to speak) and worked the human body without

is autonomous: it is a 'law to itself.' Though the man feels commanded to do the act whether he likes it or not, it is nevertheless the man himself—his own Reason, the highest part of his nature—which issues the command or makes the law. Hence in the highest sense he is most free when most completely the slave of duty[1].

The two positions in which we have taken Sidgwick as a peculiarly lucid exponent of Kant are in the Philosopher's own writings associated with a third in which his utilitarian disciple does not follow him. To Kant the performance of duty is not merely 'right'; it is the highest 'good' of the agent. Here we have already found reason to believe that Kant is right, and can only refer the sceptic to the testimony of his own consciousness. If he denies that he finds in his own consciousness the judgement 'goodness of conduct possesses a higher worth than anything else in the world,' the only way to argue with him would be to try to show that his own actions, or at least his judgements of himself and other men, really imply that he thinks so; that his approval of himself when he does right and disapproval when he does wrong are quite inexplicable upon the assumption that bad conduct is merely conduct which is irrational from the point of view of Society though wholly rational from his own private point of view. For the man who believes it, the judgement 'Morality is good and the greatest of goods' or 'the good will is the most important element in the good' is as much a simple and ultimate deliverance of the moral consciousness as the judgement 'It is right to promote the general good.'

the intervention of any subjective motive, involved him in much unnecessarily mysterious language about the Autonomy of the Will. When Kant said that the will is a 'law to itself' he meant that in right action Reason is a law to the will; in fact, according to Kant, the will is Reason, at least when the will is rightly directed. Wrong acts, it would appear, can only be said to be willed, and so to be free, according to Kant, in so far as Reason might have intervened to stop them and did not. But the Psychology of wrong action is a subject on which Kant is as vague as he is unsatisfactory.

[1] No doubt in Kant's own view this use of the term 'free' (in which it can only be applied to right acts) implies also the opposite of 'determined' or 'necessitated' (see below, Book III, ch. iii, § i). The double sense in which Kant used the term 'free' is very clearly pointed out by Prof. Sidgwick, *Methods of Ethics*, Book I, ch. v and Appendix.

II

So far we may regard Kant as having laid down in the most impressive way the principles which must form the basis of every constructive ethical system[1]. But in Kant's own view these positions are associated with two other doctrines which require further examination. In the first place he assumed that out of this bare idea of a categorical imperative, without any appeal to experience, he could extract a moral criterion, i.e. that he could ascertain what is the actual content of the Moral Law, what in detail it is right to do. Secondly, he assumed that, so far as an act is not determined by pure respect for the Moral Law, it possesses no moral value whatever. Let us examine each of these positions in turn.

The value of Kant's work consisted very largely in supplying a metaphysical basis for Ethics. So long as it is assumed that all our ordinary knowledge of matters of fact comes from experience of an 'external world,' there is always a sort of suspicion that any kind of knowledge which cannot point to such an origin must be in some sense unsubstantial or delusive. The Critique of Pure Reason demonstrates that in all our knowledge there is an element which is not derived from experience: all knowledge implies 'forms of perception' and 'forms of understanding' which are *a priori*, part of the constitution of the mind itself, not supplied to it from without. The matter of sensation is from without, but sense by itself is not thought. I cannot judge of the size and distance of particular objects without a matter supplied by sensible perception: but I could not build up these data into the conception of a square table of a certain size unless I had already notions of space, of spacial and causal relations, of

[1] Kant was no doubt wrong in supposing that all other systems but his own were based upon 'heteronomy of the Will.' This is not true of Plato and Aristotle (to say nothing of other ancient writers) whom Kant's education had not qualified him to understand, nor of the Cambridge Platonists and other English Rationalists of whom he appears to have known little or nothing. It is not true of them unless the doctrine of the categorical imperative is distorted into the precept 'Do your duty without considering whether what you are doing is good for any one or not,' and in that sense the idea of Autonomy is, as contended below, indefensible and absurd

substance and accident and the like which do not come from experience[1]. In all actual knowledge there must be a matter supplied by experience and a formal element which is *a priori*. But in Morality—in the idea of duty—we are presented with a form which needs no filling up from experience, a form which is (so to speak) its own content, since it is an immediate datum of consciousness that this *a priori* concept of duty can supply a motive to the will. Now in this position a very important truth is (as is almost universally admitted by the most Kantian of modern Moralists) confused with a very serious error. That no experience can prove an act to be right, that no accumulation of knowledge as to what *is* can possibly give us an *ought*, is a truth which can only be denied by asserting that there is no meaning in duty or in Morality. Experience of the past may tell us what has been or what will be: it cannot possibly tell us what ought to be. That which ought to be is *ex vi termini* something which as yet is not and which may conceivably never be. In that sense our moral judgements are undoubtedly *a priori* or independent of experience. But that without any appeal to experience we can get at the content as well as the form of the moral law, can easily be shown to be a pure delusion. Let us see how Kant made the attempt.

The rules of action which the categorical imperative is supposed to give us are the following:—

(1) 'So act as if the law of thine action were to become by thy will law universal.'

(2) 'Regard humanity whether in thine own person or in that of any one else always as an end and never as a means only.'

(3) 'Act as a member of a kingdom of ends[2].'

[1] This is a very inadequate and popular statement, nor do I mean to assent to Kant's idea of a form derived from the mind and a matter derived from some source outside the mind. I have merely endeavoured to explain for the benefit of any one to whom it is unfamiliar Kant's use of the terms 'form' and 'matter' so far as is necessary for the comprehension of his ethical position.

[2] Kant nowhere explains the relation in which the three rules are supposed to stand towards one another, nor does he ever bring them into close contact with one another; but in different parts of his ethical writings each one of them is treated as the fundamental principle of Morality. In practice

Let us examine the first of these rules—'Act as if the law of thy action were to become by thy will law universal.' Now it is quite true that it does follow from the very idea of there being something which it is right to do irrespectively of inclination that this course must, in the same circumstances, be binding upon every one else. And therefore in a sense it is true that no action can be really a moral rule the principle of which could not be universalized. It is good practical advice to urge that when we have to pronounce upon the morality of a proposed act we should ask ourselves whether it represents a principle which we should think it rational to will as a universal rule of conduct. But this is by itself a merely negative test. It gives us no definite information until we have made up our minds as to what it is which makes conduct rational or irrational. We can, indeed, with a little ingenuity extract from it the all-important axioms of Benevolence and Equity: for, if there is something which it is intrinsically right to do, what is right for me would be right for any one else in the same circumstances[1]: hence it must be right for me to treat every other man as it would be right for him to treat me under similar circumstances[2]. If my good is recognized as something which it is intrinsically right for others to promote, the good of each other individual must also be treated as an end the promotion of which I must look upon as incumbent upon me: hence I am bound to promote the greatest good of humanity collectively (the maxim of rational Benevolence), and to treat each individual's good as of equal value with the good of every other (the maxim of Equity). But these rules by themselves will give us no practical guidance till we know what that good is which ought to be promoted by every rational being for every other.

The Kantian maxim, properly interpreted, thus occupies in

he uses one or the other of them just as may be most convenient for the purpose of proving the particular duty with which he is dealing.

[1] This principle seems to me to require some qualification (see below, p. 116 *note*); and it is obvious that we have not really got this rule out of the form, for without knowing what sort of being the 'other' is, and what 'good' he is capable of, we cannot say what that good is worth.

[2] It is true that we are here assuming, what Kant sometimes ignores—that right conduct must mean the promotion of some end which is intrinsically good.

Ethics the same position which the law of contradiction holds in Logic[1]. The law of contradiction is a negative test of truth: it tells us that two judgements which contradict one another cannot both be true, but as to which judgements in particular are true, it will give us no information: only, when I know that judgement A is true, it will tell me that judgement B, being inconsistent therewith, cannot also be true. In the same way the Kantian rule tells us that a genuine ultimate rule of conduct must not only be logically consistent with itself, but also be such as that all its prescriptions shall be consistent with all other ethical rules. The supreme ethical precept must consist of an harmonious and self-consistent system of precepts. It need hardly be said that this by itself is a most important negative test of ethical truth. It gives us the principle upon which alone inference or reasoning (as distinct from immediate judgements of Reason) is possible in Ethics. The fact that something is a part of the true ethical rule supplies, if we assume this principle to be self-evident, a demonstrative proof that some precept inconsistent with it cannot be a part of it[2]. But as to what rule of action in particular is reasonable, it gives us no information whatever. If we interpret the rule of acting on a principle fit for law universal as equivalent to Sidgwick's three ethical axioms—of

[1] This interpretation of Kant is well insisted on by Sigwart (*Logic*, E. T., ii. p. 543 seq.). Sigwart would call the principle in question a postulate: I should venture to regard it as both a postulate and an axiom. It ought not to be denied by any one who is not prepared to question the validity of all thinking. Mr. Bradley is so far consistent that he accuses thought as well as Morality of internal inconsistency. Some of his followers (in Ethics) have been less logical. Mr. Bradley is only following out his own principle to its logical conclusion when, in his frequent polemics against Casuistry, he denies apparently the possibility of any inference whatever in the ethical sphere (see below, Bk. III, ch. vi). It is enough for our present purpose to insist that the self-evident axioms of Ethics and the inferences based upon them have as much validity as any other parts of our thinking.

[2] It will be observed that I am speaking of elements in the supreme ethical *rule*, not elements of the *end*. The end itself must not contain *intrinsically* incompatible elements, but in particular circumstances elements of the end are often incompatible: but the ethical rule says 'in that case promote the good which is of most intrinsic value.' Even *the* good may, and obviously does, contain elements which cannot all be enjoyed by the same persons.

Benevolence, Equity and Prudence—we shall get rules for the promotion and distribution of the good or ultimate end, but no information as to what particular things are good: and, until we know that, we cannot get any principles from which we can deduce the right course of conduct in any one single case. If with Sidgwick (who could quote much in Kant himself to support this interpretation) we made 'good' in this connexion equivalent to 'pleasure,' and interpreted our rule to mean 'promote universal pleasure and distribute it equally,' we should obviously have gone beyond the mere *a priori* formal rule. We should have appealed to experience—an appeal which our categorical imperative was intended by Kant to exclude. The judgement 'Happiness ought to be promoted' is no doubt in a sense *a priori*, but not in the sense that no information derived from experience is necessary to its being made. Kant himself admits that the concept of happiness is of empirical origin[1]. Experience must tell us what happiness is before we can judge happiness to be good. Still more obviously experience is wanted to tell us what particular goods constitute happiness, or what are the means to procure those goods. It might be thought that Kant could get a content for the Moral Law by holding that the true good of man is simply Morality, a concept which might be said to be of purely *a priori* origin, and that we should find out what particular actions are right by considering what actions would promote universal Morality. But here again, if the concept of the end is in a sense purely *a priori*, experience is needed to tell us the means; and Kant has incapacitated himself from adopting this solution of the problem by the exaggerated Libertarianism which made him pronounce an action due to another's influence to be not truly 'free,' and therefore without moral value[2]. Consequently, he pronounced that it was im-

[1] 'All the elements which belong to the notion of happiness are altogether empirical, i.e. they must be borrowed from experience' (*Grundlegung zur Met. d. Sitten*, § 2, translated by Abbot in Kant's *Theory of Ethics*, 4th ed., 1889, p. 35).

[2] *Metaph. Anfangsgründe d. Tugendlehre*, Einleitung, § iv seq. (Abbot, p. 296). But this is qualified (hardly consistently) by the admission of a negative duty towards the moral well-being of others, i.e. not to create temptations (Abbot, p. 304).

possible for one man to make another's moral good his end. Hence if Virtue is by itself to constitute the end, it must be the man's own virtue that he must treat as his end. To tell a man to make his own virtue an end will not tell him what to do until he knows what acts it is virtuous to perform, and as to this the formula that what is right for him is right for others will give him no information whatever. How then did Kant attempt to extract out of the bare form of the Moral Law a knowledge of the particular actions which are right or wrong?

It is impossible to maintain that Kant gives a clear and consistent meaning to his own dictum. Sometimes the irrationality of willing the universal adoption of the immoral course appears to turn simply upon the fact that the social consequences to which the adoption of such a will would lead are consequences which no rational man could regard as good. We cannot will universal promise-breaking because in that case no promises would be made, and at times the irrationality of willing such a consequence seems to turn upon its injurious social effects. Still more clearly when Kant pronounces that we cannot rationally will the non-development of our faculties, the irrationality of such a course is made to depend simply upon the fact that the rational man actually regards this non-development as bad and their development as good[1]. Here the appeal to

[1] 'A third' [the first two cases are suicide and breach of promise] 'finds in himself a talent which with the help of some culture might make him a useful man in many respects. But he finds himself in comfortable circumstances, and prefers to indulge in pleasure rather than to take pains in enlarging and improving his happy natural capacities. He asks, however, whether his maxim of neglect of his natural gifts, besides agreeing with his inclination to indulgence, agrees also with what is called duty. He sees then that a system of nature could indeed subsist with such a universal law although men (like the South Sea islanders) should let their talents rust, and resolve to devote their lives merely to idleness, amusement, and propagation of their species—in a word, to enjoyment; but he cannot possibly *will* that this should be a universal law of nature, or be implanted in us as such by a natural instinct. For, as a rational being, he necessarily wills that his faculties be developed, since they serve him, and have been given him, for all sorts of possible purposes' (*Grundlegung*, § 4: Abbot, p. 40). I pass over the objections (1) that elsewhere the development of faculties is not regarded by Kant as an ultimate good, the only ultimate goods being Virtue and Happiness; (2) that Kant relies upon teleological assumptions

consequences which can only be known by experience is scarcely disguised: the *a priori* judgement relates simply to the goodness or badness of the end. But Kant was able to conceal from himself the necessity of this appeal to experience, because in certain carefully selected instances he was able to point to the appearance of *internal* contradiction in the reverse of the accepted rule[1]. We cannot rationally will that men shall break their promises, because in that case no promises would be made; and we cannot rationally will something to be done which will make it impossible to observe the very rule which we will. In a society in which there were no promises, it would no longer be possible to observe our proposed rule of universal promise-breaking; if no promises are made, none can be broken. Now even here it is evident that Kant falls back upon his experience of human nature to tell him what will be the consequences of his act: but still he might maintain that, given this much experience, the contradiction is self-evident. Yet it is easy to show that absence of contradiction, in this sense, would be a very irrational test of conduct. Kant himself appears to concede that there would be no internal contradiction in willing that all men should leave their faculties undeveloped. Nor would there be any internal contradiction in adopting as our rule of action the promotion of universal misery, or at least of the maximum of misery which should be consistent with the continued survival of the human race. That is, indeed, according to some Pessimists, precisely the end which is actually realized in the world as we know it.

And, just as we hold many acts to be wrong which involve no internal contradiction, so there are many things which we pronounce right in spite of such contradiction. Kant tells us that we cannot rationally will universal promise-breaking, because the universal adoption of such a rule would lead to a state of things in which the rule 'Break your promises' could no longer be observed. We must not commit suicide, because if every

to which he was not entitled: he had no right (from his point of view) to assume that our faculties were 'given' us for any reason whatever.

[1] It is true that even in the selected cases the contradiction is not really internal. It is the actual structure of human society which makes the suggested rule unworkable.

one did so, there would soon be nobody left to practise the virtue of suicide. Then are we, it may be asked, to deny that Philanthropy is a duty because the universal practice of a reasonable Philanthropy would lead to a state of things in which there would be no poor upon whom to practise that virtue? Shall we refuse to bless the peacemaker, because if every one shared his disposition, there would be no quarrels to adjust? And then, again, how unreasonable is the alternative with which we are presented—either to will universal suicide and universal lying, or to forbid each of these practices in any circumstances whatever! As reasonably might we pronounce Kant's own celibacy a crime because universal celibacy would rapidly extinguish the human race and (consequently) the practice of celibacy.

It is true that the emergence of an internal contradiction (in Kant's sense) in any suggested moral rule does show that we have not reached an *ultimate* principle of conduct. We can, indeed, put such rules as 'Give to the poor' into a universal form by making them hypothetical: 'So long as there are any poor, relieve them;' but so might we say, 'So long as there are any human beings alive, let them commit suicide.' Still, the fact that the rule is only applicable to a particular set of circumstances does show that we have not reached an *ultimate* principle. The rule, 'Be charitably disposed,' may, indeed, be universally willed: but then Kant's object in applying his test of fitness for law universal is to supply a guide for the details of outward conduct, not for mere dispositions and intentions, and this purpose is not served by such generalities as these. And even in this case there is really a reference to the physical constitution of human beings which is known to us only from experience. We might interpret charity to mean 'a disposition to promote good,' but the absence of internal contradiction will not tell us what good is. Moreover, as has already been pointed out, although an ultimate moral principle must be free from internal contradiction, it is impossible to deny that many immoral principles might very well be universalized without leading to any such contradiction. The structure of the Universe and of human nature is quite as consistent with the non-development

as with the development of human faculties. And if the criterion is not of universal application, how are we to know when to apply it, and when not?

The fact is that Kant appears to have confused two distinct senses of the term 'categorical.' When he sets forth that it is of the essence of every moral law to be categorical, he means that it must admit of no exception due to the subjective disinclination of the individual for the course of action which it prescribes. We must not say, 'I admit Temperance or Veracity to be right in a general way: only I personally happen to have such a rooted antipathy to Temperance or Veracity, or whatever it be, that I must regard myself as an exception to the general rule.' To talk in that way no doubt destroys the very nature of a Moral Law. It is an essential characteristic of the Moral Law that whatever is right for me must be right for every man in precisely the same circumstances[1]. But when Kant tries to make out this mere unconditionality of a rule an absolute test of its reasonableness, he has to assume that the categorical character of an imperative excludes the possibility of an exception based not on the mere subjective disinclination of the individual, but on the nature of the case. He does not see that the rule 'Do this except in such and such circumstances' is just as 'categorical' and just as little 'hypothetical' as the rule 'Do this under all circumstances whatever,' so long as the exceptions are recognized as no less universal in their application, no less based upon the reason and nature of things, than the original rule. Kant in fact confuses the inclusion of an exception *in* a moral rule with the admission of an exception *to* a moral rule. He does not recognize that the difference between a rule with an exception and a grammatically categorical rule is often a purely verbal one. The precept 'Do no murder' admits of no exceptions, because 'murder' means 'killing except in such and such circumstances.' The rule 'Thou shalt not kill' has exceptions. So the rule 'Lie not' could be represented as equally

[1] That we can only hold this principle by including in the 'circumstances' the man's own character and disposition (other than an indisposition to perform what has once been proved to be his duty), I have contended below in the chapter on 'Vocation' (vol. ii, ch. iv).

'categorical' if there were as clear a usage in favour of the proposition that a legitimate untruth is no lie, as there is in favour of the proposition that in certain circumstances killing is no murder. We are obliged sometimes to express a moral rule in the form of a general command with an exception simply because the enumeration of the circumstances to which the rule is inapplicable is shorter and more convenient than an exhaustive enumeration of all the cases to which it is applicable. And it is clear that every rule, however general, implies some set of circumstances in which alone it is capable of being applied. The duty of not committing adultery is only applicable to the relations between two persons of whom one at least has a lawful spouse, and it is obvious that this term 'lawful' postulates a large number of highly complicated social arrangements, about which there is by no means a universal consensus, and which the most enthusiastic Kantian could hardly attempt to determine on any *a priori* principle. Either, then, we must say that every possible rule really involves a hypothesis under which alone it is applicable; or we may say that every moral law excludes all exception if only you put it into a sufficiently general, and a sufficiently internal, form. 'Kill not' has exceptions: 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself' (properly understood) has none[1]. But, in whichever way it is put, it is plain that we can get no criterion of Morality out of the presence or absence of exceptions. 'Kill not' has exceptions, and yet (subject to the exceptions) is accounted a good moral principle. On the other hand, 'Thou shalt love thy friend and hate thine enemy' does not appeal to us as the highest morality, in spite of its being quite as categorical as the Christian precept.

Kant's attempt to extract an ethical criterion out of the bare form of the Moral Law is the more remarkable, because he did not hold (as he is sometimes supposed to do) that there is no other rational end of action except the bare performance of duty.

[1] 'The Moral Law, we may say, has to be expressed in the form, "Be this," not in the form, "Do this." The possibility of expressing any rule in this form may be regarded as deciding whether it can or cannot have a distinctively moral character. Christianity gave prominence to the doctrine that the true moral law says "hate not," instead of "kill not"' (Leslie Stephen, *Science of Ethics*, 1882, p. 155).

Had he held that view, it would have become fairly impossible for him even to have persuaded himself that he had discovered in the bare form of the law any content for the idea of duty[1]. If a man is to perform his duty, he must know what that duty is; and the mere knowledge that, when he has discovered what his duty is, it is a thing categorically commanded does not help to find out what it is. It is impossible, in short, to show the rationality of one course of action rather than another until we have admitted that something else besides the performance of duty—some objective good other than the state of the will—is a rational end of action or possesses value[2]. And Kant did admit that there is such another rational end of action—which

[1] Dr. Lipps (*Die ethischen Grundfragen*, 1899, p. 158 seq.) has attempted to clear Kant of the imputation that his categorical imperative has no content by suggesting that the content is supplied by all our natural desires and inclinations: the moral law simply prescribes the way and extent to which they should be indulged. I believe that this is very largely the explanation of Kant's own view of the matter, but it is open to the objection that it allows all actual tendencies of human nature ('aller möglichen menschlichen Zwecke') to be indulged in proportion to their actual strength, except in so far as their indulgence interferes with the indulgence of other such tendencies in ourselves and in other individuals. It is obvious that we should have to appeal to experience to know what is the relative strength of these tendencies; and, after all, it supplies us with a very unsatisfactory test of their relative value. If only the tendency to opium-smoking were sufficiently strong in a whole community, the Kantian principle (as interpreted by Dr. Lipps) would make universal opium-smoking a categorical imperative.

[2] Lotze, the last man in the world to sanction vulgar Hedonism, has said: 'There is nothing at all in the world, which would have any value until it has produced some pleasure in some being or other capable of enjoyment. Everything antecedent to this is naught but an indifferent kind of fact, to which a value of its own can be ascribed only in an anticipatory way, and with reference to some pleasure that is to originate from it' (*Practical Philosophy*, Eng. Trans. by Ladd, p. 19). I believe this statement might be defended, since (*a*) pleasure is an element in all ultimate good. (*b*) Lotze has not said that the value lies exclusively in the pleasure abstracted from the other elements of consciousness, or that it is to be measured by the *amount* of that pleasure. But his statement seems to me liable to misunderstanding. On the other hand, it is surprising to find Lotze admitting that 'the effort to hold fast pleasure, or to regain it, and to avoid pain, are the only springs of all practical activity' (*Microcosmus*, E. T., i. p. 688), but here again the taint of Hedonism is removed by a recognition of differences in the quality of the pleasure.

possesses worth, not indeed 'absolutely and unconditionally,' but on one condition—that it does not interfere with Virtue. And that other end is Happiness. From this position it would seem logically to follow that the true criterion would be the tendency of an action to promote for all mankind Happiness in so far as is compatible with Virtue. This would supply us with a quite intelligible and workable view of the moral criterion, and it would correspond roughly with the actual deliverances of the moral consciousness. That it is an inadequate view of the ultimate end of human life, I have already attempted to show; and its deficiencies will be further illustrated when we pass on to the other mistaken assumption, from which I am anxious to dissociate Kant's fundamental doctrine of a categorical imperative.

III

That duty should be done for duty's sake we have seen to be really implied in the very notion of there being such a thing as duty. But it does not follow that the desire to do one's duty must always be the sole and exclusive motive of right conduct, or that conduct not consciously inspired by respect for the Moral Law as such must possess no moral value at all. Yet such was the assumption of Kant himself. To Kant the most unselfish [1] devotion to wife or child, the most ardent patriotism, the most comprehensive philanthropy, possessed no more moral value than the purest avarice or the most unmitigated selfishness. Unless the man loves, or rather behaves as though he loved (since love, he holds, cannot be commanded) wife, or country, or humanity simply from an actual, conscious respect for the Moral Law, his conduct is worthless—not necessarily wrong (for it is not a crime to promote one's own happiness when duty does not forbid), but entirely without moral value. The will that wills from pure love of the brethren is morally on a level with the will that wills from pure love of self. It is of no more value than the

[1] I speak popularly: to Kant there could be no such thing as an 'unselfish' love of anything except duty, and even that could only be 'respected,' not 'loved.' To Kant (in his stricter moments), as to Bentham, Benevolence not inspired by pure sense of duty was merely a love of benevolent pleasure.

behaviour of an animal. Such is the revolting and inhuman Stoicism to which Kant's ideal logically leads. It is, as Schopenhauer puts it, the 'apotheosis of lovelessness, the exact opposite, as it is, of the Christian doctrine of Morals[1].' In well-known lines the poet Schiller makes the disciple of Kant complain:

> Gladly, I serve my friends, but alas I do it with pleasure.
> Hence I am plagued with the doubt that I am not a virtuous person:

in reply to which the answer given is:

> Sure, your only resource is to try to despise them entirely,
> And then with aversion to do what your duty enjoins you[2].

Nor can it be alleged that Kant has any desire to conceal this result. He holds *ex professo* that all desire is bad. 'The inclinations themselves being sources of want, are so far from having an absolute worth for which they should be desired, that on the contrary it must be the universal wish of every rational being to be wholly free from them[3].' We might ask in what, according to Kant, happiness is to consist? Happiness, as we know it, arises entirely from the satisfaction of desires[4], and happiness is admitted to be a rational end of action; how then can the desires be consistently treated as a mere encumbrance which the rational man would fain be without? But it is enough to point out the utter discrepancy between the Kantian dogma and the strongest moral convictions of mankind. The 'common-sense' philosophy of Bishop Butler is here a far better exponent of the moral consciousness. Insisting as strongly as Kant upon the claims of Conscience, he yet recognizes that Conscience does not prescribe this total suppression of all other 'passions, propensions, or affections.' It rather pronounces that some of the desires ought to be encouraged, some suppressed, others moderated or controlled, and all subordinated to Benevolence and self-love—the two great rational impulses which make for the good of ourselves and our fellow men[5]. And in

[1] *Ueber die Grundlage der Moral*, § 6 (*The Basis of Morality*, trans. by A. B. Bullock, 1903, p. 49). He goes on to call it a piece of 'stupid moral pedantry' (*taktlosen moralischen Pedantismus*).

[2] From *Die Philosophen*.

[3] *Grundlegung*, § 2 (Abbot, p. 46).

[4] Including the desire of pleasure.

[5] I do not mean to accept this as a fully adequate account of the matter,

this teaching Butler was only developing the principles of Aristotle who (amid many retrogressions) advanced beyond Plato just by his recognition of the fact that desire is as essential an element of human nature as Reason; that the raw material (so to speak) of the sublimest virtues and of the coarsest vices is the same, that natural impulses are good or evil just according as they are or are not controlled by the ideals which Reason sets up [1]. Granted fully that an act may be done from the bare sense of duty, from a desire which is created solely by our conviction that a certain course is intrinsically right or reasonable, this is not in most cases an adequate analysis of a good man's motives. In most of his acts the good man is doing something towards which he *has* some inclination apart from the consideration that it is his duty. He works for wife and children because he loves them: he speaks the truth because he feels an instinctive repulsion for a lie: he relieves suffering because 'he cannot bear' to see another man in pain. It is rather in the selection of the right one from among the many impulses by which his will is from time to time solicited, and in the reinforcement of it when it is absolutely or relatively too weak, that the 'sense of duty' need come into play [2]. It is only perhaps at rare crises in the moral life, when duty calls for some great sacrifice or commands resistance to some great temptation, that the 'sense of duty' becomes the one all-sufficient motive present to the consciousness. It is no doubt eminently desirable that the sense of duty should be always present in the background or, as the Psychologists have called it, the 'fringe' of consciousness [3]; that Reason should be (so to speak) a consenting party to all our actions, however strongly prompted by natural impulses, and be ready to inhibit even the noblest and most generous of them when it threatens to oppose

unless the idea of Benevolence and that of self-love have been understood in a non-hedonistic sense.

[1] Cf. below, p. 153 *sq.*

[2] Dr. Martineau's Ethics have the merit of developing this idea: but he exaggerates when he denies that the love of duty or desire 'to do what is right and reasonable as such,' can ever be a 'spring of action' at all (*Types of Ethical Theory*, 3rd ed., ii. p. 279 *sq.*).

[3] Cf. James, *Psychology*, i. 258 *sq.*, 471 *sq.*, &c.

itself to duty's call. But, even when this is not the case, even when in a particular act or in the general tenour of a man's life conscious and deliberate respect for the Moral Law as such cannot be said to occupy this paramount and predominant position, we do not in fact regard the act or the character of such a man as entirely destitute of moral value. We may regard his defective sense of duty as a moral defect or shortcoming, but we do not regard him as on a level with the selfish pleasure-seeker. It would be a violent perversion of psychological fact to represent that every man who works hard and resists temptations to self-indulgence from love for his wife and children, or from a zeal for his profession, is inspired by pure respect for the abstract Moral Law; it would be a perversion of moral fact (attested in the only way in which moral fact can be attested, by the evidence of consciousness) to say that such conduct is morally worthless[1]. To do so would involve the denial of moral value not only to much of the normally good conduct of average civilized men, and to all the more elementary morality of children or savages (to whom the idea of a Moral Law or an abstract 'duty' can hardly be said to have occurred), but also to some of the very noblest acts of generous but one-sided and imperfect characters.

The source of Kant's ethical mistake must be sought in his defective Psychology. He assumed, as completely as Hobbes or Locke, that the motive of every action is pleasure except in one case. Reason had, he thought, the power of arbitrarily interposing, and acting directly upon the man's will, by laying upon him a categorical command to do this or abstain from that: but, except when and in so far as the man was influenced by pure respect for such injunctions, his will was always under the influence of pleasure and pain. Apart from the power of interposition accorded to this *deus ex machina*, the categorical

[1] It would perhaps be consistent with Kantian principles to say that the act possesses *some* moral value because there is *some* respect for the moral law; but this explanation does not really express the facts. The man is possibly not thinking of the Moral Law *as such* at all (I have explained below that he may nevertheless recognize that there is something intrinsically good in his love for wife and children), and yet we do recognize that the disinterested affection by itself gives the act moral value.

imperative, Kant was a psychological Hedonist. Moreover, he assumed that an action determined by self-interest was completely 'natural,' that the motives of the calculating pleasure-seeker were the same in kind as the mere animal impulses of the savage or even the beast. He would probably have explained the behaviour of animals as due to the pursuit of pleasure. He did not recognize the high degree of abstraction, the high intellectual and moral development, which is implied in the deliberate pursuit of so ideal an object as 'maximum pleasure' or 'happiness' in general. Regarding all desire as desire for pleasure, and the desire of pleasure as merely 'natural,' he was obviously unable to recognize any difference in moral value between one kind of desire and another. Benevolence and malevolence were simply different forms of pleasure-seeking. From the point of view which we have adopted we are able to recognize that the value of the desire depends upon the nature of the objects desired. We can pronounce, and as a matter of fact the moral consciousness does pronounce, that devotion to the family or the tribe is a higher and nobler motive of action than devotion to one's own good, love of knowledge better than love of sensual indulgence, indignation against cruelty or injustice better than resentment provoked by jealousy. We may, therefore, ascribe moral value to a man's acts in proportion as they are inspired by a desire of objects which Reason pronounces intrinsically good, although the man may not pursue them consciously because Reason pronounces those objects to be good—still less because Reason pronounces the acts to be right apart from their tendency to gratify a desire for the objects. In proportion as the moral consciousness is developed, or at all events in proportion as the man's intellectual development allows his morality to become self-conscious and reflective, the intrinsic value of the objects which he pursues is recognized with increasing distinctness and abstractness; and this recognition brings with it reinforcement of the higher impulse as against the competing desires which might otherwise take its place. Some degree of this consciousness of value is no doubt necessary to make it a motive which can fairly be described as a higher desire at all. The most rudimentary family affection implies a certain consciousness (wholly

unanalysed no doubt) of the claims or rights or intrinsic worth of other persons, and of the consequent superiority of such an impulse to mere sensual desire—a consciousness which is not present in the maternal impulses of the lower animals, in which naturalistic writers have seen realized their highest ideal of conduct. But even in highly developed moral natures, and in some of the highest actions of such natures, it is often impossible to discover the conscious presence in any high degree of respect for the abstract idea of duty or the Moral Law as such. The philanthropist is carried away by an enthusiasm of humanity which does not stop to ask whether to relieve suffering or to fight against oppression is or is not contained in the categorical imperative of Reason. And such zeal for the things contained in the law we certainly pronounce morally good, however little conscious reference there may be to the law which contains them.

IV

And from this point of view the thought may occur to us: 'if good conduct implies only desire for objects which Reason can recognize as good, why do we need the "sense of duty" or the categorical imperative at all?' May we not say with Aristotle that a man is not really good unless he likes the things that another may recognize as constituting his duty, or even go beyond Aristotle (who did insist that in developed Morality there should be a conscious recognition that the things desired were good), and say 'It is nobler to be so fired by the thought of tyranny and injustice and suffering, so to feel others' wrongs as though they were one's own, that the question never arises at all whether it is a duty to fight against them, or even whether it be καλὸν to do so? Would it not show a positive defect in the man's character if he should decline to make a sacrifice which the good of his family demanded till he had calmly reflected that it was a dutiful or a beautiful thing for him to do? Is it not better to be socially useful because one loves one's neighbours as oneself than to regard them with indifference, and yet to feed or serve them only because it is one's duty?'

We are here in the presence of something like an antinomy.

On the one hand, it does seem nobler to love the things contained in the law than to do good things unwillingly because we feel bound to obey the law as such. On the other hand, it seems difficult to admit that there can be any nobler motive than devotion to duty as such, or that there can be a perfect character, or even a perfect act, in the inspiration of which such devotion has no place.

The solution of our difficulty seems to lie in a consideration which we have hitherto neglected. It is quite true that an action may be good which is done from the love of some good object. The poor man who shares his scanty dinner with a still poorer friend has certainly done an act possessing moral worth. The scholar who 'scorns delights, and lives laborious days' from sheer love of Learning is not to be treated as on a level with the mere sensualist because he is not habitually inspired by reflection on the duty of research, or even because he may be seriously wanting in devotion to many kinds of social good. But love of any particular good object is always liable to interfere with the promotion of some other, and, it may be, more important good. Love of Learning is good, but the scholar in whom that passion extinguishes all others may become selfish and inhuman, if all social impulses are stifled in its pursuit. Nero's love of Art was a redeeming feature in his character, but the fact (if it be a fact) that he 'fiddled while Rome was burning' was rather an aggravation than an extenuation of his callous indifference to human suffering. Enthusiasm for some particular cause is good, if the cause be a righteous one; but the root of all fanaticism lies in a devotion to some single good which extinguishes all scruple or respect for objects the observance of which is no less essential to human Well-being than Temperance or the influence of the Church or even the conversion of sinners. Unselfish affection or loyalty to particular persons or societies is good; but the morality of the man who surrenders himself to it without restraint may degenerate into mere honour among thieves. Family affection may steel the heart against the claims of a wider humanity. Even a genuine Patriotism may produce absolute blindness to the plainest dictates of Humanity or international Justice. And so on. Now duty means, as we have seen, precisely devotion to the various

kinds of good in proportion to their relative value and importance. No one then can be trusted at all times and in all circumstances to attribute to each good precisely its proper degree of worth in whom there is not strong devotion to that supreme good in which all others are summed up. It is not necessary that a man should make the sense of duty the sole motive of all his conduct, provided it is always ready to inhibit an action the moment he sees any reason for believing that it is contrary to his duty. The conscientious man will not seek actually to substitute the sense of duty for other motives of conduct, because he will recognize that many of the commonplace actions of life are better performed from some other impulse, and that the cultivation of altruistic or ideal impulses is actually a part of that ideal of human character which duty bids him promote in himself as in others. He will eat his breakfast from force of habit or because he is hungry; the sense of duty will only be ready, in the background of consciousness, so to speak [1], to stimulate him when appetite fails or to inhibit him when some call of duty demands the suspension or omission of that meal on a particular morning. He will select things to eat and drink because he likes them, provided that he is always ready to modify his choice when there is reason to believe that what he likes is unwholesome or too expensive. He will labour for the good of his family because he cares about it as much or more than he does for his own good, but the sense of duty will always be ready to remind him of the claims of the workmen or the

[1] There is considerable ethical importance in the modern Psychologist's recognition that we do not think of one thing or 'idea' at a time, but that while the centre of consciousness may be occupied by some idea, there is a 'fringe' of other ideas present with various degrees of clearness and distinctness (like the object lying on the outside of the fringe of vision, e. g. persons of whose presence we are conscious without actually looking at them sufficiently to know who they are). An idea present in the 'fringe' of consciousness can always become the central object of the mental vision when occasion arises for it. The good man will always have the sense of duty somewhere in the fringe of his consciousness. This view is not inconsistent with the doctrine strongly insisted on by many Psychologists that we can only *attend* to one 'object' at a time; but at all events such an 'object' may include many 'ideas' (in James's sense) which may be the object of different degrees and kinds of attention.

customers whom his methods of business may prejudice. He will throw himself into the work of a profession, because he likes it, because he is ambitious of success, recognition, opportunities of more interesting or more important work and the like; but he will be ready to listen to the faintest whisper of a suspicion arising in his mind that the path of ambition and the path of real social duty have begun to diverge. The Priest will devote himself heart and soul to the good of his parish simply because he wants to see his flock happier and better. He will do his work all the more effectively the more completely he identifies their well-being with his own, the more he takes delight in his occupation; but the sense of duty will always be ready to press upon his attention the more disagreeable or the more unpopular duty, to suggest the claims of study to the unstudious, the claims of his poor to the man whose heart is in books, the claims of rest or reflection or devotion when absorption in work threatens to dry up the foundations of thought and of feeling. In proportion as a man's habitual desires or 'interests' are identified with some wider form or element of human good, the danger of collisions between various forms of good—the difference, so to speak, between devotion to a particular end and devotion to the good in general—may tend to disappear. The sense of duty may be less needed as check or as spur to the man of ardent temperament, absorbed in self-denying philanthropy, than it is to the average man whose habitual energies are divided by a remunerative profession and an affectionate family. But it is unnecessary to illustrate the possibilities of moral aberration which attend upon devotion to every form of good less than the whole.

And where there is devotion to the whole of human good, to the 'matter' of the Moral Law, to every kind of good object in due proportion to its intrinsic worth, need there then be any thought of the 'form' at all? Is the idea of 'duty for duty's sake' part of the highest ideal of character or is it always a note of imperfection? The question is not an easy one, for every term that we use in speaking of such matters is a more or less ambiguous one: but I would suggest the following outline of an answer:—

(1) Goodness in the narrower moral sense—the right direction of the will—is itself the greatest of goods, and must always be paramount in the ideal man; but the ideal man will care about many other things besides the right direction of his own and other people's wills—knowledge, beauty, particular persons, social intercourse, various pleasures in proportion to their intrinsic value. It is scarcely possible that he should acquire this habitual right direction of the will without more or less consciously thinking of it; but, in so far as he does come to love the things prescribed by Reason, respect for duty as such will tend to pass into a sense of the relative value of the goods which he loves, and to lose that abstractness, and also that sense of constraint and obligation, which are elements in the sense of duty as understood by Kant and his followers. At bottom the sense of duty is the due appreciation of the proportionate objective value of ends. In this sense alone is the 'feeling of obligation' an ultimate and indispensable element of the moral consciousness[1].

(2) Since the various ends the promotion of which constitutes the content of the Moral Law are all resolvable into some state of conscious beings, it may be said that an ideal love of mankind would supersede all sense of duty as such, provided that this love of persons be taken to include a desire of various goods for them in proportion to their relative value, and in particular a predominant desire for their moral Well-being. In this sense it may be said that 'perfect love casteth out fear'—even of the Moral Law—and constitutes by itself, in the strictest possible sense, 'the fulfilment of the law.' At its highest the sense of duty is identical with the rational love of persons (including in due measure self-love), and the things which constitute their true good.

(3) For a mind which believes in the existence of a Person whose will is absolutely directed towards the true good, the love of such a Person, the conscious direction of the will towards the end which He wills, absorbs into itself the sense of duty. The love of God is the love of duty with the added intensity both of intellectual clearness and of emotional strength which arises from

[1] 'Une conscience morale n'aboutit pas à la formule: *je dois faire ceci*, mais à la formule: *ceci est à faire*' (Rauh, *L'Expérience morale*, p. 32).

the conviction that an ideal is also already real. How far and in what sense the belief in such a Person must be considered as involved or implied in the idea of an objective Morality, is a question which must be considered hereafter. Meanwhile I notice merely as a psychological fact that in the religious consciousness the idea of Duty may lose those aspects and associations which often cause a revolt against the idea of a categorical imperative.

Kant's categorical imperative has been justly (in some of its aspects) ridiculed by Schopenhauer as a mere survival from the lowest form of the 'servile' theological Morality which he professed to have abandoned. 'Whether he calls his fetich categorical imperative or Fitziputzli,' makes no difference[1]. It was the survival of the drill-sergeant Theology of eighteenth-century Prussia with the drill-sergeant turned into an abstraction. In depersonalizing his imperative and cutting it adrift from its connexion with the real world as a whole, life as a whole, good as a whole, he reduced it to something arbitrary, abstract, almost inhuman. Repersonalize it, regard it as the reflex in the human soul of the Will which wills the supreme good of humanity, and the categorical imperative loses all those features which tend to present it as an emotion incompatible with and inferior to the other impulses or emotions which may inspire men to right conduct. To the Christian or the Theist with a worthy idea of God the love of goodness is no longer distinguishable from the love of the concrete good which forms the content of the divine Will as of all good human wills.

V

How far the love of goodness, whether or not embodied in a Person, can supersede in the actual conditions of human life the sense of effort, of struggle, of sacrifice commonly associated with the aspect of Morality embodied in the term Duty, is another question to which we must return hereafter. If the sense of duty be really the sense of the relative value of ends, it is obvious that some sense of constraint or 'obligation' must always be connected with the idea of duty, so long as any of

[1] *Grundlage der Moral*, § 6 (E. T., p. 50).

the ends which we rationally desire are incompatible with the attainment of any other such ends which we either desire or feel that we ought to desire. Meanwhile, I may notice the close connexion between the two great defects in the Kantian ethical system which have been pointed out—the harsh 'dualism' of his view of human good and his erroneous doctrine as to the motives of moral conduct. The ethical criterion to which the Kantian system logically points, and which Kant at moments seems on the verge of deliberately adopting, is the tendency of actions to promote a Well-being or εὐδαιμονία in which there are two elements, (1) Virtue or the performance of duty, (2) Happiness conceived of as mere pleasure. This view has been criticized as inadequate, and it might be possible to enlarge upon the harsh psychological dualism which it involves. It cuts human nature into two halves which have no connexion with, or relation to, or influence on one another. Between these two elements in the ideal human life there seems to be nothing in common: nay, there is at least the appearance of actual irreconcilability between them. In so far as a man succeeds in finding happiness in his work, his Virtue, it might seem, must suffer ('but alas! with pleasure I do it'); in so far as he lives for duty, considered as something opposed to his inclinations, he will tend to be unhappy[1]. Happiness, according to Kant, has value, but no moral value: the work of Virtue on the other hand seems to consist precisely in its tendency to thwart those natural impulses in the satisfaction of which ordinary happiness consists. Now the moment it is recognized that action may be due neither to respect for Moral Law nor to desire for pleasure, but to some other desire, that such desires may have very various degrees of moral value, that Reason does not condemn or supersede but only regulates desire, that pleasure is good or bad according to the nature of the desire from the gratification of which it springs,—both the inadequacy and the dualism disappear. Virtue no longer seems to consist in thwarting all the other impulses of our nature: happiness is no longer destitute of moral value when it arises from the satisfaction in due degree of all the desires which possess an intrinsic worth of their own, a value which may often be superior

[1] No doubt Kant often repudiates this deduction from his principles.

to the value which they possess as mere sources of pleasure. The conditions of human life may prevent the actual attainment of this ideal reconciliation, but there is no necessary or invariable antagonism between the two ends; they tend to pass into a single, internally harmonious and self-consistent, ideal of life.

VI

It may be desirable to add a word about the second of the three moral criteria put forward by Kant—the rule 'Use humanity whether in thine own person or in that of any other always as an end, never as a means only.' It is the principle less frequently insisted on in Kant's own writings, and its relation to the other is not very precisely determined. He uses it chiefly to prove the immorality of suicide and of sexual transgression. There can be no question of the deep moral significance of the principle, but it is too vague to be really of any use as a moral criterion without knowledge of a kind which cannot be extracted out of the formula itself. We must know what is the true end of human life before we can tell whether a certain course of conduct does or does not involve treating humanity only as a means. Now Kant (as we have seen) only recognizes two ends in human life—one primary, i. e. Morality, the other secondary, i. e. happiness. On Kant's view of Free-will it is impossible to make another man immoral or less moral. Hence it would seem that he has no right to condemn conduct towards another for any other reason than its interference with his other end—happiness. And this is clearly not always done by the kind of conduct which he has in mind. Nor, even if this consideration be waived, can he show that the conduct which he condemns involves using the body of another, or one's own, as a means, any more than much conduct which no one could describe as immoral. I am using a porter's body as a means when I employ him to carry trunks for me, and there is nothing immoral in my doing so. I am not using him *only* as a means, if I pay him for his work and treat him as a moral being no less entitled to a share in all the true goods of life than myself. Kant never said anything so absurd (though he is constantly cited as doing so) as that we should never use

humanity as a means, but only that we should never use it as a means without using it also as an end, and it is impossible (apart from some conception of a concrete end or good of human life) to show that sexual immorality might not be equally compatible with a like recognition of others' claims. We should only have to insist on just and considerate treatment of those who have been called the 'priestesses of humanity[1].' The one kind of exchange of services is, on Kant's premisses, exactly on a level with the other. Kant's real feeling was no doubt that the conduct in question was inconsistent with a true ideal of the relations between man and woman, but it was impossible for him to prove that inconsistency so long as he narrowed his conception of the ideal human life down to the performance of social duty on the one hand and the indiscriminate enjoyment of pleasure on the other. It is not the treating of humanity as a means that strikes us as wrong (for that might quite well be compatible with recognizing it also as an end), but the treating of humanity as a means *in this particular way*, as a means to such and such a kind of sensual pleasure, to such and such an end in which Reason can find no value. It is only because we have judged already that such treatment is a degradation of humanity that we pronounce it to be using humanity 'only as a means.'

Once again, we see the impossibility of reducing moral judgements to a merely intellectual, non-moral principle; of getting a criterion out of mere formal conceptions, which take no account of the content or intended consequences on which depends all the morality or the immorality of our actions. Mere universality or freedom from contradiction is no test of goodness or badness. The judgement of value cannot be reduced to any other sort of judgement—a judgement of formal consistency or a judgement as to the relation between ends and means, which takes no account of the character of those ends. It

[1] Kant has specially in mind the case of certain other kinds of sexual vice, and there his contention would be still more hopeless, if we assume that happiness (= pleasure) is the only end except duty considered simply as the promotion of pleasure for others (*Tugendlehre*, Th. I. § 7, Semple's Translation, 3rd ed., 1871, p. 240).

is only in estimating the value of an end that the moral Reason really comes into play. Abstract the form of the law from the matter of it, and there is nothing left on which a judgement of value can be passed. A rule of action is not moral because it is consistent, unless it consistently conduces to an end in which Reason can recognize value; neither is the making of humanity a means immoral unless the end to which it is a means be one which Reason refuses to recognize as part of the true end for man. The non-recognition of this principle involved Kant in the absurdity of gravely questioning whether it was lawful to cut one's hair, and of solemnly pronouncing the conduct of a woman who cuts off her hair to sell it—irrespectively of the motives for which she wants money—not 'altogether devoid of blame[1].' Such a verdict will probably fail to commend itself to readers of Mr. Marion Crawford's touching 'Cigarette-maker's Romance.'

VII

It has generally been recognized that the best expression of Kant's fundamental ethical principle is to be found in his third rule—'Act as a member of a kingdom of ends': that is to say 'Act in such a way as to treat thyself and every other human being as of equal intrinsic value; behave as a member of a society in which each regards the good of each other as of equal value with his own, and is so treated by the rest,' in which each is both end and means, in which each realizes his own good in promoting that of others. That such an ideal of human Society must, as far as it goes, be approved by the moral consciousness, follows from what has been already said: but, considered as a guide to the details of conduct, it suffers from the same fatal ambiguity as the preceding formulae. There is no sufficient definition or explanation of this good of others which we are to promote. We have still got nothing but a 'form' without any content. If we fill up the deficiency from other parts of Kant's system, and interpret each man's end as 'goodness + happiness,' that (as has been explained) gives us an intelligible, but a rough and inadequate, criterion of Morality: and on that

[1] *Tugendlehre*, Th. I. § 6 (Semple, p. 239 *sq.*).

interpretation, which in many passages would appear to be Kant's own[1], we must cast to the winds the whole of his elaborate attempt to get at the details of conduct without appeal to experience or calculation of consequences, and to exhibit that good will as actuated by the mere form of a universal law without any regard to the content or matter of it.

In truth there run through the whole of Kant's ethical teaching two inconsistent and irreconcilable lines of thought—one of which is the basis (though only the basis) of all sound ethical theory; while the other has proved the fruitful parent of every extravagance, superstition, and absurdity by which the scientific study of Ethics has been, and still is, impeded. Every formula of Kant's may be interpreted, and at times appears to be interpreted by himself, in each of these opposite ways. 'Duty is a categorical imperative.' That may mean 'there is a right course of action which is intrinsically right and reasonable for every man whether he likes it or not,' and that is simply an analysis of what duty means to any one to whom it means anything at all. Or it may mean 'there are certain acts which we recognize as being right to do without thinking of the ends (social or otherwise) which they will tend to realize,' than which no better definition could be given of the irrational in conduct. 'Duty for duty's sake' may mean that 'we should pursue the good or intrinsically valuable end just because it is good,' or it may mean that we should act without reference to an end at all. 'Act on a principle fit for law universal' may mean 'Pursue the ends which Reason

[1] 'The realization of the *summum bonum* in the world is the necessary object of a will determinable by the Moral Law' (*Kritik d. praktischen Vernunft*, Dialektik, Pt. II, § 4, p. 262, and Abbot, p. 218). 'Now inasmuch as virtue and happiness together constitute the possession of the *summum bonum* in a person, and the distribution of happiness in exact proportion to morality . . . constitutes the *summum bonum* of a possible world; hence this *summum bonum* expresses the whole, the perfect good' (Dialektik, Pt. II, Abbot, p. 206). Of course, in so far as Kant did not recognize that the good will means the will that wills the promotion and just distribution of happiness, he was still liable to the criticism that he has provided no means of determining what will is moral: but on the whole it would seem that in such passages as the above he meant to define virtue as the willing of acts tending to promote happiness and the just distribution of it.

pronounces to be intrinsically valuable for others no less than for thyself,' or it may mean 'Make the avoidance of internal inconsistency the criterion of thy conduct.' 'Treat humanity as an end and never merely as means' may mean 'Regard the true Well-being of every man as possessing an intrinsic worth,' or it may mean 'Regard it as beneath thy dignity to be of use to the society in which thou livest, and indulge in phantastic scruples about things which do no real harm to thyself or anybody else.' The 'kingdom of ends' represents simply a combination of the two last maxims, and is liable to the same charge of ambiguity; though of all the formulae employed by Kant it is the one which lends itself most readily to the more rational interpretation.

VIII

One more way of expressing our criticism upon the Kantian system shall be attempted, because it will supply a convenient opportunity of giving a definite answer to an ethical question of fundamental importance—the question which is the logically prior conception, the idea of 'good' or the idea of 'right.' Kant never thoroughly made up his mind about this question. He always started with the idea of 'right'; and all his difficulties arose from the attempt to give a meaning to, and to find a content for, this idea of 'right' without appealing to the idea of 'good.' In our view the idea of 'good' or 'value' is logically the primary conception, though psychologically the idea of 'right' may often in modern men be more explicitly developed. That action is right which tends to bring about the good. There is no attempt here to get rid of the ultimate unanalysable 'ought.' The good is that which 'ought' to be[1].

[1] Such a statement is in no way inconsistent with the doctrine which I fully accept, that the word 'good' is indefinable: we can only bring out the real meaning of the idea by the use of words which equally imply the notion. 'Good,' 'Ought' (when applied to ends), 'Value,' 'the End' I regard as synonymous terms. Mr. Moore, in his recent *Principia Ethica*, has done well to emphasize in a very striking manner that 'good is indefinable'; but when he goes on to say (p. 17) 'and yet, so far as I know, there is only one ethical writer, Prof. Henry Sidgwick, who has clearly recognized and stated this fact,' I cannot admit the historical accuracy of his statement. To say

The difference between the two terms is this: that the term 'right' is applicable only to voluntary actions; the term 'good' is applicable to many things besides acts. Entirely apart from the question, 'who caused such things?' I judge that pain or discordant music or ugly pictures (i.e. of course the enduring of pain by conscious beings, the listening to discords or the contemplation of bad pictures by conscious beings) are bad things. They seem to me bad whether they arise from chance or necessity or voluntary action. Only because I have so judged is there any ground for the judgement 'it is right, in so far as it is possible, to get rid of these things'; but, whether they can be got rid of or not, they are equally bad[1]. The will that

nothing of writers who (like Mr. Moore and myself) learned the doctrine largely from Sidgwick, I should contend that it was taught with sufficient distinctness by Plato (whatever may be thought of his further attempt to show that only the good has real existence), Aristotle, and a host of modern writers who have studied in their school – by no one more emphatically than by Cudworth. The only criticism which I should make upon Mr. Moore's exposition of it is that he ignores the other ways in which the same notion may be expressed, and in particular the correlative notion of 'right' or 'ought.' He is so possessed with this idea that the 'good' is indefinable that he will not even trouble to expound and illustrate it in such ways as are possible in the case of ultimate ideas.

[1] The non-recognition of this principle (so fully admitted, as we have seen, by Lotze) is to my mind the leading defect in the Bishop of Clogher's in many respects admirable *Short Study of Ethics* (2nd ed., 1901). Bishop d'Arcy fully appreciates the defects of Kant's 'formalism,' and of the attempt to pronounce acts right or wrong without regard to consequences known to us from experience: yet we find him asserting 'the end, or good, of man is *man doing*, the concretion of man and the world. This concrete activity is the only thing which can be called *good* in itself' (pp. 168–9), and 'the only true good is to be good in the sense of performing the good act' (p. 277). Such statements seem to me to imply a reversion to Kant's attempt to say that to cause toothache is wrong without having first decided whether toothache (however caused) is or is not a bad thing. And it goes beyond Kant in pronouncing that nothing but a moral act is good at all. Wundt seems to me equally open to criticism, when he talks about happiness as being 'not an end in itself, but a by-product of moral effort' (*Ethics*, Eng. Trans., iii. p. 90), or about an 'objectively worthless sum of individual happinesses' (ib., p. 83). It is curious that so modern and 'scientific' a Moralist as Wundt should be almost the only living thinker of high eminence who outkants Kant in his view of the exclusive value of a moral end, which, however, is to him not so much the perfection of individual wills as a vague and impersonal 'progress of humanity.'

deliberately causes or refuses to fight against such things may be, and I believe is, a worse evil than the pain or the bad music or the ugly pictures. But unless these things were evils, the will that refused to remove them would not be evil either; its acts would not be acts of a wrongly directed will. Kant generally ends by coming round to this view—that the right or rational act is the act which wills the good. Unfortunately he did not see that with that admission his attempt to avoid the appeal to experience completely breaks down. It is possible, though it is irrational, to will particular acts without attending to the consequences which experience shows likely to result from them[1]; it is impossible to pronounce that something is good until one knows what it is. No experience will tell us what is good unless we include in our idea of 'experience' an unavowed judgement of value; but without experience of what a thing is it is impossible to say whether it is good or not. It is obvious that this necessity of experience for sound ethical judgements goes a long way to explain the actual divergences of moral codes. When the Caliph Omar (if the story be not a myth) ordered the Alexandrian library to be burned, it is probable that he knew very imperfectly what the Alexandrian library or any other library really was. I do not deny that there might be fanatics who knowing a good deal about the contents of these books would still have ordered them to be burnt; but it is probable that a more extensive acquaintance with their contents would have modified the Caliph's judgement. The consistent Kantian, i. e. a disciple of Kant in his most logical but least rational moments, ought to be able to say whether they should be burned without knowing what sort of books they were or even that they were books at all.

Our moral judgements are ultimately judgements of Value. The fundamental idea in Morality is the idea of Value, in which the idea of 'ought' is implicitly contained. The advantage involved in the use of the term 'value' lies in its freedom from

[1] Strictly no doubt there must be some feature in the act known to us, to account for our choosing it, but the motive might be the simple desire to act without further reflection—the 'pure cussedness' from which, indeed, it is so hard to distinguish the motive of the ideal Kantian, when Kantism is understood on its irrational side.

many of the exaggerations and mystifications which have sometimes created a prejudice against the term 'ought,' even in minds which have no prejudice against the reality which it signifies. The idea of 'good' and the idea of 'right' are, as it seems to me, correlative terms. It is implied in the idea of 'good' that it ought to be promoted; the idea of 'right' is meaningless apart from a 'good' which right actions tend to promote. If, finally, we ask what is the relation of the idea of value to the idea of 'moral' value, I should answer that all that has value has moral value, in the sense that it must be moral, in due proportion to the amount of that value, to promote it; but by moral value we generally mean the particular kind of value which we assign to a good character. That value is, as I believe, the greatest of all values. Pleasure is a good, and it is right for a man to promote it in himself as in others. We assign value to the pleasure, but we do not assign any particular value to the acts or to the character from which it springs, since this promotion of private pleasure does not necessarily indicate a good character, and even the promotion of the highest ends may have no moral value when the promotion of such ends forms no part of the man's motive; only when we recognize a man's conduct as exhibiting the preference of the good because it is the good or the preference of some higher to some lower good for its own sake do we assign to it the peculiar kind and degree of value which we usually term moral value [1].

[1] I have in this chapter for the most part avoided all criticism of sides of the Kantian Ethics which could not be discussed without reference to the defects of the metaphysical system with which they are so closely connected. Even Kant's purely ethical position I have only examined so far as seemed desirable as a means of helping forward my own argument.

CHAPTER VI

REASON AND FEELING

I

In the preceding chapters I have assumed that Kant is right in making Morality to be essentially rational, in holding that moral approval is a judgement of the Intellect, not a feeling or an emotion. This position seems now to require some further justification than it has yet received, and this justification may perhaps best take the form of a reply to the objections which are commonly made to it. The reply will be one which may be thought to involve considerable qualifications of the creed known as ethical Rationalism as represented by such men as Clarke in the seventeenth century and by Kant and other modern Idealists.

The most obvious form which objections are likely to take will be something of this kind: Does not common opinion recognize that Morality is an affair, not of the head, but of the heart? Are not our moral perceptions attended with a glow and warmth of feeling which is entirely absent from our perception (say) of a mathematical truth[1]? Are not good men very often stupid and bad men often intellectual? If we admit that there is an intellectual element in what is commonly called Conscience, must we not at least say with Bishop Butler that Conscience is neither merely 'a sentiment of the understanding' nor 'a perception of the heart,' but 'partakes of the nature of both[2]'?

[1] Cf. the passage quoted from Martineau, *Types of Ethical Theory*, below, p. 165.

[2] *Dissertation of Virtue.* This change from the more rationalistic position of the Sermons was perhaps due to the influence of Hutcheson. He now uses the term 'moral sense' as a synonym for Conscience.

The common objections seem to imply several misconceptions—misconceptions, however, for which the exaggerations of Kant and other ethical Rationalists are, it must be admitted, largely responsible. In the first place, when it is held that moral judgements are given by Reason, we do not imply that their rationality is the sole reason for the acts being done. Undoubtedly it is possible to see that an act is right with absolute clearness and not to do it—nay, to feel practically little or no disposition to do it. Even when an act is done out of pure 'respect' for a recognized duty, there must at least be present a 'desire for what is right and reasonable as such' (to use Professor Sidgwick's phrase) or the duty will not be done. And we have seen reason to hold that Kant was wrong in insisting that this rational desire is or ought to be the sole motive which impels us to the performance of good actions. It has been admitted that normally the ends prescribed by the Practical Reason are objects of desire for their own sake, that actions directed towards such ends may possess moral value even when the thought of an abstract law does not enter into the agent's consciousness at all; and that even the best actions of the best men are commonly influenced by other desires besides bare respect for duty. Now when Conscience presents itself as partly an 'emotion of the heart,' the term is probably used to include not merely the perception of what is right but also the impulses which cause what is right to be done—to include at least the 'respect' or love for the good and perhaps also the whole of those benevolent or other higher affections and emotions which are approved by the moral Reason as motives to action[1]; while the question at issue between ethical Rationalists and their opponents is simply the question 'by what faculty or part of our nature do we discover that an act ought to be done?'

It may further be admitted that the judgements of Practical

[1] 'The single act of conscience may be a feeling, an emotion, an impulse or a judgment' (Wundt, *Ethics*, Eng. Trans., vol. iii, p. 60). Wundt is surely wrong in making Conscience or *συνείδησις* mean originally a 'knowing with God,' instead of an 'inner' or 'self-knowledge.' The word, it is significant to observe, is first found in the generation immediately after Aristotle—a period of great progress both in ethical feeling and ethical theory.

Reason normally create a more or less powerful impulse towards the performance of what they enjoin; and, in those who are powerfully influenced by such judgements, they are undoubtedly accompanied by an emotion of a kind which is wholly absent from mere mathematical judgements. Still, it is possible to distinguish between the judgement that the act is right and the emotions by which that judgement is accompanied. It will perhaps be contended that in some persons who would commonly be described as very good men emotion of one kind or another is so obviously the main inspirer of their conduct that it is difficult to detect any intellectual judgement at all. And it may be admitted that as a matter of psychological fact the process by which many people come to attach the idea of rightness to particular kinds of conduct is almost entirely an emotional one: but still I should contend that, in so far as the idea of goodness or rightness forms the object of that emotion, the intellectual judgement must necessarily be there. This liability to be influenced or even wholly determined by emotional causes is no peculiarity of ethical judgements. All sorts of psychological causes may be at work in inducing a man to accept a particular theory as to the causes of the French Revolution; but the most prejudiced and passionate view of the matter and the most calm and scientific would be alike impossible to a man whose consciousness did not contain the intellectual concept or category of Causality. Nobody would ever dream of describing such a historical judgement as itself a mere emotion. Just in the same way, emotion may inspire particular judgements of right and wrong, but it could not create the idea of 'right' or of 'good.' Even in those cases where the actual motive is most clearly emotional, some perception of the goodness of the act may be said to enter into the exciting cause of the emotion, or the emotion may be said to be accompanied by a judgement of its own value. A man may devote himself enthusiastically to some philanthropic object, from a passion excited by the abstract idea of Justice, or he may be moved by a pure love of humanity which is nevertheless accompanied by the judgement that it is good to feel such a love. In some cases one, in others the other may seem to be the more

appropriate mode of statement, but the two kinds of judgement—the judgement which ascribes value to the emotion and the judgement which ascribes value to an object and by so doing excites the emotion which leads to action—run into one another. All that is necessary to contend for at present is that judgement and emotion are logically distinguishable, and that the judgement of value does more than merely record the fact of the emotion being felt.

II

When the popular unwillingness to recognize the rational character of our moral perceptions assumes the form of a philosophical theory, it tends to pass either into the theory of a 'moral sense' or into the theory of a moral 'faculty called Conscience' which is represented as wholly *sui generis*—distinct alike from intellectual judgement and from any kind of feeling or emotion. Let us briefly examine each of these views.

In the writings of John Locke the Rationalism of Cumberland and the Cambridge Platonists had degenerated into mere theological Utilitarianism. Locke continued to use the old language about Morality being rational; but in him that language had come to mean almost the opposite of what it was originally intended to mean. The appeal to Reason was intended as an answer to Hobbes, and now Reason was used in a sense in which Hobbes himself would have had no objection to base Morality upon it. By Reason was no longer meant a faculty which originates the idea of something intrinsically good in itself, and which pronounces what things are intrinsically good, but merely the faculty which connects ends and means [1].

[1] Exception may be taken in some quarters to the use of the word 'faculty' at all in this connexion. The word has fallen into disfavour partly because by a certain school it has been used to suggest the idea of a definite number of mental activities sharply distinguishable from and independent of each other—planted, as Plato would have said, as it were 'in a wooden horse,' to the ignoring of the unity of self-consciousness, and partly because the invention of a specific faculty has often taken the place of logical or psychological analysis of complicated mental processes. I hope I have sufficiently guarded myself against these mistakes. But to proscribe altogether the use of the word 'faculty' is to fall into the very superstition which the denouncers of it have in view. Whatever we do, there must be

To Locke Virtue was rational because it could be demonstrated that without it a man will infallibly go to Hell. Hence in men like Shaftesbury and Hutcheson we find a recoil from a way of thinking which seemed to make Morality a mere matter of selfish calculation. It was thought that Morality would be all the safer if it were removed altogether from the jurisdiction of the intellect, and placed under the control of 'the heart.' Moreover, these men shared, or at least had incompletely shaken off, the metaphysical presuppositions of the Master against whose Ethics they had revolted. Experience, by which was practically meant sensation, was regarded as the sole source of knowledge. If, therefore, Morality was to be shown to be something real, it must, it seemed, be revealed to us by some kind of feeling or sensation. Yet to base Morality upon the deliverances of the ordinary sensibility, upon the pleasures and pains of the bodily senses, meant of course Hedonism pure and simple. To avoid this consequence they invented a special sense which was to be the source of our moral knowledge, just as sight is the source of our colour-perceptions and hearing of our sound-perceptions. Morality was made to rest (like all our knowledge) upon a kind of feeling; only it was a *specific* feeling. Moral approbation was a feeling wholly *sui generis*, arising from the contemplation of good acts; disapprobation a feeling similarly arising from the contemplation of bad acts. Not to insist on the complete want of analogy between the bodily senses and this organless sense of Morality, all such schemes are open to one insuperable objection. If moral approbation is a mere feeling, how can it claim any superiority over other feelings? Granted that it gives me a pleasant feeling to do a kind action, and that it causes me a particular kind of discomfort to tell a lie, that may be a very good reason under normal circumstances for my doing the one and avoiding the other. But supposing I do not happen to be sensitive to this particular kind of feeling, or supposing I am so constituted that a violation of some social conventionality

a faculty or capacity (*δύναμις*) of doing it. In asking what is the moral faculty, I mean only to ask to which of the distinguishable activities of the single self-conscious self our ideas of right and wrong are to be referred.

shocks me more than a moral offence[1], why should I attach any paramount importance to this particular feeling of moral disapprobation? I may have a certain capacity for the pleasures of whist, but I do not feel bound to play it if I like reading a novel better. If we grant that immorality does normally cause me mental or emotional distress and discomfort of a particular kind; still under particular circumstances Morality may cause me more pain and discomfort of another kind. I may dislike the pains of Conscience much, but I may dislike the thumbscrew more. Why am I bound, if threatened with torture for refusing to reveal a secret which I am bound to keep, or falsely to accuse an innocent man, to prefer the pleasures of an easy conscience to those of a whole skin and easy nerves? To insist on the specific character of the feeling in question is nothing to the point; the pleasures of whist-playing are different from those of touch or taste, but they are not necessarily superior to them. The taste of port is specifically different from that of sherry, but it is not necessarily superior to it. If it be said 'Oh! but you are inwardly conscious that these pleasures are superior in kind, and not merely in quality, to those of sense, that they *ought* to be attended to more than others,' is not that really admitting that we have to do with something more than a mere feeling, with a dictate of Reason or a judgement of value? It is not the feeling which claims obedience, but the judgement which assigns a value to that feeling.

Moreover, not only does a Moral Sense theory fail to supply any reason why the individual should accord to his own moral perceptions a primacy among the feelings and emotions of which his nature is capable, but it is totally unable to assign any

[1] 'The not taking into consideration this authority, which is implied in the reflex idea of approbation or disapprobation, seems a material deficiency or omission in Lord Shaftesbury's *Inquiry concerning Virtue*. He has shewn beyond all contradiction that virtue is naturally the interest or happiness, and vice the misery of such a creature as man, placed in the circumstances which we are in this world. But suppose there are particular exceptions; a case which the author was unwilling to put.... Or suppose a case which he has put and determined, that of a sceptick not convinced of this happy tendency of virtue or being of a contrary opinion. His determination is, that it would be *without remedy*' (Butler, Pref. to *Fifteen Sermons*).

universal validity to such moral perceptions. Inconsistent or contradictory feelings, *qua* feelings, are equally true and valid for those who feel them. When the colour-blind man calls the red light green or grey, it really is green or grey to him; his judgement is as true as that of the man who pronounces it red. Feelings as feelings are not 'true' or 'false' at all; while as to the judgements based upon them, the judgement of *A* that he sees red and of *B* that he sees green, these no doubt possess objective validity, but such statements as to what two men actually feel are perfectly compatible with one another. Now, if a good act means simply an act which causes me to experience a particular kind of feeling which I call moral approbation, it is undeniable that such feelings are occasioned in different men by different, and even opposite, kinds of conduct. The pious fraud may occasion no less pleasure to the man brought up to regard such acts as right than a sacrifice made in the cause of truth will cause in the heart of another differently educated. A Spanish bull-fight excites feelings of enthusiastic approval in the minds of most Spaniards and feelings of lively disapproval in most Englishmen. Observe exactly where the difficulty lies. It is not the practical difficulty of ascertaining moral truth. Every ethical system has to admit that the Conscience of the individual is not infallible, that men's ethical judgements do as a matter of fact contradict one another. However strongly I feel that a certain course of conduct is right, I may make a mistake, just as I may make a mistake about a scientific or historical theory to which I may be no less passionately attached. The objectivity of the moral judgement does not mean the infallibility of the individual, or even of a general consensus of individuals at a particular time and place. What is meant is that *if I am right* in my approbation of this conduct, then, if you disapprove of it, you must be wrong. If Morality be a matter of objective truth or falsity, then the Moral Law remains unaffected, though you and I—nay, the whole human race in its present stage of moral development—may have erroneously conceived some of its provisions. But, if the goodness of an act means simply that the act occasions a specific emotion in particular men, then the same

act may be at one and the same time good and bad. Moral feelings will have no more objective truth or validity than any other feelings which vary in their nature or intensity with the varying sensibility of different men's skins or sensory nerves. The bull-fight will be neither right nor wrong, but simply right to some people, wrong to others, just as mustard is neither objectively nice nor objectively nasty, but simply nice to some people, nasty to others [1].

It may perhaps be replied, 'These feelings are not what make things right or wrong; they are merely the subjective index by which we recognize the presence of an actual quality in the world of objective fact.' This is no doubt what was really meant by the doctrine of Moral Sense in the hands of constructive Moralists like Hutcheson. A full reply to the objection would involve a discussion of the metaphysical system which it presupposes. No doubt if knowledge of any kind could be explained by mere feeling, Morality so explained would at least possess as much objectivity as the rest of our knowledge. Moral Sense theories are *no more* fatal to Morality than Sensationalism is to Science. I can only point out here that, just as all knowledge implies something more than feeling, so, if Morality is to possess any universal truth or validity, moral perceptions must be regarded as judgements. The specific moral feeling can be at most merely the occasion or index by which we are enabled to make the judgement, it cannot be its sole source; just as I cannot actually make the judgement that this triangle is larger than that without sensible experience, though there is more in the judgement than mere sense. The essential idea of 'good' cannot come from feeling, though feeling may sometimes be psychologically the cause or occasion of my pronouncing this or that particular act to be right or good.

III

It has been the practice of ethical Rationalists to compare the moral faculty with the faculty by which we immediately appre-

[1] It may indeed be contended that there is an aesthetic, and therefore an objective, element even in gastronomic matters. If so, we must substitute some pleasure of a still more purely sensuous type.

hend mathematical axioms or the laws of thought. I have myself contended that it is possible to discover moral axioms, the truth of which appeals to us very much in the same way as the truth of the axioms 'If equals be added to equals, the wholes are equal' or 'Two straight lines cannot enclose a space.' Such ethical axioms are the three great laws of Prudence, Rational Benevolence, and Equity, which Professor Sidgwick regards as the ultimate basis of Ethics. And I have fully admitted the validity and importance of these axioms. But this comparison of moral to mathematical axioms may be overdone. It may be insisted on in a way which ignores some of the characteristic features of our ethical judgements, and its palpable failure to represent the facts may lead to a reaction against the whole idea of rational Morality. Rationalistic Moralists have not always observed that in themselves there is nothing ethical about these axioms of Prudence, Benevolence, and Equity except the bare formal notion or category of 'the good' which they involve. The axiom of Equity, 'one man's good is of as much intrinsic worth as the like good of another[1],' may, indeed, be reduced to the form of a merely analytical judgement. That which I recognize as having value in one man I must recognize as having the same value in another, provided it is really the same thing that is implied in the assertion that it has value. And the two other axioms—those of Benevolence and Prudence—simply assert that more good is always more valuable than less good. They are not merely comparable to the axioms of Mathematics; they are simply particular applications of those axioms. The judgement that the value of the good of all is greater than of any one man's may be treated as a mere case of the mathematical axiom that the whole is greater than its part. But so far there is nothing really ethical about the judgement except in so far as it involves the ethical proposition that value or good is one of the things which have quantity. Yet, after all, such a way of representing the matter is really superficial; for it is in the conception of value that the whole meaning of the judgement lies. And that conception of value cannot be analysed away

[1] This qualification of the axiom (not recognized by Utilitarians like Bentham or Sidgwick) I shall explain and defend in Chap. viii of this Book.

into the mere statement of an emotional fact. Considered as a mere statement of psychological fact, no assertion could well be more false than that my feeling towards one man, the emotion which I experience in knowing that he is benefited or that he is injured, is the same as that which I should experience in the case of any other. The ethical Rationalists are, it appears to me, quite right in treating these judgements as genuine axioms which are to some extent analogous to the axioms of mathematics; but such axioms are by themselves quite incapable of solving any concrete ethical problem. The really ethical element in them is contained simply in the conception of 'value' or 'good,' and we cannot use them till we have pronounced some concrete thing or experience to be good. They resemble the axioms of Mathematics just because they are purely formal. All that they can do is to direct us as to the way we are to distribute 'the good' when we know what it is. The really ethical judgement lies in the pronouncement that this or that is good. And, when we come to the judgement which pronounces that this or that is good or has value, the judgement assumes a form which seems psychologically much less like the mathematical, and much more like the aesthetic, judgement—a form consequently in which it can with much more plausibility be compared to a mere emotion or even a mere sensation. I can give no reason why I judge one pleasure to be higher than another—that of reading Shakespeare than that of drinking champagne—except that I see it to be so, just as I can give no reason why I know this to be beautiful or that to be square, except that I see that they are so. We naturally express our judgement by saying 'I feel it to be so,' rather than 'I know it to be so.' And that is one reason why they have so often been supposed to be mere feelings. Very often probably this *immediacy* is all that is meant by those who insist on treating them as feelings of a supposed 'Moral Sense.' But only a Sensationalist can suppose that the expression 'I feel *that A is B*' represents a mere feeling. 'I feel' is here merely a loose popular synonym for 'I judge.' Propositions cannot be felt.

Another fact which has favoured the theory is the impossibility

of expressing our real and concrete ethical judgements, as distinct from the merely formal and abstract axioms just considered, with the scientific accuracy and definiteness characteristic of other self-evident truths. Although the judgement 'pleasure is good but not so good as Virtue' is an immediate judgement, and so far resembles a mathematical axiom, it is one which does not admit of being expressed with the same precision as mathematical judgements. And still more when we come to particular applications of our idea of value, when we ask what is the relative value of this as compared with that pleasure, or what is the comparative importance for an individual or a nation of a definite kind of artistic sensibility and of social feeling, we do not find that consensus among all who barely understand the meaning of the terms employed which can be claimed for the axioms of mathematics. And the essence of the really ethical judgement lies not in general axioms of the type suggested above but in the concrete judgement 'this particular pleasure or this kind of knowledge is good or valuable,' 'that kind of pleasure is bad'; here the immediacy seems to be much more like the immediacy of the aesthetic appreciation, or even that of a mere judgement of perception, 'this is green.' All these characteristics of the ethical judgement tend to win acceptance for the Moral Sense theory of moral apprehension.

How far the analogy between aesthetic judgements and ethical can be admitted, must depend upon the view which we take of the aesthetic judgement itself. The Moral Sense writers have usually assumed that aesthetic approval is merely a particular kind of subjective feeling. The judgement 'this picture is beautiful' means to them merely 'I get from the contemplation of this picture a particular kind of pleasant feeling.' And, if that were the case, the relegation of the moral judgement to the same category as aesthetic appreciation would be fatal to that authority or universality which we divine to be of its essence. On the other hand we may be prepared to deny that the judgement of one man on matters of Art or Poetry is as good as another, as would undeniably be the case if the aesthetic judgement were nothing but a matter of feeling. We may maintain that there is a right and wrong in matters of aesthetic appreciation as well

as in matters of conduct. We may claim for the aesthetic judgement a certain objectivity, and consequently a partly rational character. But Aesthetics is a much more difficult Science than Ethics. The objectivity of aesthetic appreciation is much more difficult to defend, the relation between the rational or intellectual and the merely sensuous or emotional elements in it much more difficult to determine, than is the case with the moral judgement. At all events, the theory of an absolute standard of aesthetic value could not be defended without a more elaborate treatment of the whole subject than would be here in place. Consequently, I dispense myself from any further attempt to define the relations between aesthetic and moral value, and will only point out that the analogy between aesthetic perception and moral may be admitted without giving up the position that there is an element in the moral judgement which cannot be reduced to mere subjective feeling or emotion and which must be regarded as belonging to the rational or intellectual part of our nature.

And when once the rational and objective character of the aesthetic judgement is admitted, we may with great advantage insist upon this rather than upon the mathematical analogy, because the comparison avoids a suggestion which is apt to cleave to the mathematical analogy—the suggestion that these judgements of value can be made prior to and independent of experience[1]. The judgement 'this view is beautiful' no doubt (in so far as it claims that the man who does not think so makes a mistake) asserts something which is not given in experience, but no one contends that it can be made without looking at the view, or even without the experience of other views and pictures by which the man's aesthetic sensibility has been cultivated. Even the ordinary judgement of perception ('this is a square object') involves, for those who have learnt the lesson of Kant's Critique, much besides mere sensation—the forms of space and

[1] It is of course admitted by Kant that even the mathematical axioms in point of time are not prior to experience; his contention is that, when once there has been experience of space or number in general, their truth is seen independently of any particular fact or facts of experience—that the *universal* truth of the principle is implied or presupposed in each particular judgement about space or number.

time, the categories of substance and accident, quantity, &c. And so the judgement 'this act of charity is good' involves no doubt experience, for we cannot pronounce that it is good without knowing what it is, an admission which was, as we have seen, never explicitly made by Kant himself. But it remains true (1) that the judgement of value is an immediate judgement of the Practical Reason, not a mere feeling; (2) that the essence of the judgement—the idea of value—is a distinct intellectual concept or category; and (3) that the moral judgement possesses a universality or objectivity which cannot be ascribed to mere sensations or to the judgements of perception founded upon them[1]. So much is involved in the very idea of Morality or duty or moral obligation. The very heart of our moral conviction is that there is something which every rational being, in so far as he is rational, must recognize as intrinsically right, that that something must be the same for all persons under the same conditions, and cannot be dependent upon the subjective caprice of particular persons. The Moral Sense theory, duly realized and thought out, necessarily involves the admission that that conviction on our part is a delusion. There is, therefore, no real analogy between an ethical 'perception' (if the word is to be allowed) and the sensations, perceptions, or emotions with which they are compared by the Moral Sense school. So far then ethical Rationalism is right, when once we have got rid of Kant's attempt to make out that the ethical judgement is not merely not derived from experience but does not require as its condition knowledge derived from experience[2].

IV

But there are further elements of truth in the Moral Sense position to which we have not yet done justice.

[1] Of course there is an objectivity even in the judgement of perception. My toothache as a feeling is purely subjective in the sense that I alone feel it. But my judgement 'I have a toothache' claims objectivity. I mean that the man who denies is in error.

[2] By experience is here meant of course experience in the sense of the Empiricists—mere sensible experience. There is no objection to saying that moral judgements are derived from experience if we include in the term 'experience' the whole of our intellectual as well as our other psychical activities.

In the first place we must emphasize what is already implied in the admission that experience is necessary to the ethical judgement. This admission implies that the ethical judgement is invariably based upon some fact of feeling; since experience, though it includes more than feeling, does always involve feeling. The ethical judgement pronounces that something has value, and we do not on reflection pronounce that anything can have value except some state of consciousness. I do not, indeed, believe that feeling represents the only element in, or aspect of, consciousness which has value; but feeling is always an element in every state of consciousness, and an inseparable element. And no judgement can be pronounced as to whether a state of consciousness is good without taking the feeling-aspect of it into account. Feeling is therefore always part of the ground on which an ethical judgement is based. This represents the true element in Hedonism. The mistake of Hedonism lies in trying to abstract the feeling side of consciousness from its other sides, and making the whole value of the consciousness to lie in that feeling-aspect, the cognitive and conative elements being deliberately put out of sight; while the value of feeling itself is supposed to reside in the mere abstract pleasantness in respect of which all pleasures are qualitatively alike, and not in the total content which is pleasant. We have already accepted the position that knowledge and goodness are intrinsically valuable elements of consciousness. Yet these things taken apart from feeling are as much abstractions as feeling when taken apart from knowledge and volition. And it is impossible to say what value we should assign to the latter, if they were capable of actually existing apart from the feeling by which they are necessarily and inevitably accompanied. I can, indeed, intelligibly say that knowledge and goodness, even when accompanied by bodily pain, are good; but, even when the pursuit of knowledge or the doing of a good action brings with it a measure of pain, some measure of pleasant feeling normally accompanies those intellectual or volitional states. When I say that the state is on the whole painful, I mean that its pleasantness simply as pleasantness is outweighed by pains of another kind, and yet I may think that it possesses more value than many states which on the whole are pleasant.

We may, indeed, attach value to knowledge even for a consciousness which does not find pleasure in its possession; but, if so, we must do so either for its uses or effects or *propter spem*, as a step to an enjoyment of which the man is capable but to which he has not yet attained. In a consciousness which was for ever incapable of feeling the smallest pleasure or interest in what it knew, it would be difficult to say that knowledge could be an end-in-itself. Indeed, the very idea of an 'end' implies the existence of beings with tendencies, desires, or impulses for which some kind of satisfaction can be found in that end. This satisfaction is not the same thing as pleasure, but there can be no satisfaction without some degree (however low) of pleasure. 'The good' is an intellectual category, but it is a category which would be meaningless in a purely knowing consciousness. Hence it may be doubted whether we could rationally attach any value even to the good will in a consciousness which not only did not derive, but was intrinsically and for ever incapable of deriving, any pleasure or satisfaction from its goodness. We may, indeed, recognize that the good will has a value, and ought consequently to be cultivated, in those who, as a matter of present fact, do not care about goodness and derive no pleasure from it. But then we should say that they ought to care about it. In so far as it is possible for a man to do his duty without liking the dutiful action taken by itself (apart from the pains incidentally involved in it), we should say that that was because he is not good enough. The value of goodness does not mean merely its actual pleasurableness to the agent at this or that moment; but still I can as little conceive it psychologically possible for a man to say 'My whole will is completely devoted to and concentrated upon the good, but it gives me not the smallest pleasure or satisfaction to be good' as I could attach any meaning to the statement 'I recognize indeed the exquisite beauty of that landscape, but, as far as my own pleasure goes, I would just as soon gaze at a blank wall'; though I can quite intelligibly say 'This picture gives me more pleasure than that other which I acknowledge to be more beautiful.' Beauty is more than pleasure, but it is unintelligible without it. Value is not a feeling, but it cannot be recognized as attributable to anything in consciousness

which can excite no feeling of pleasure in its possessor. The fallacy of Hedonism lies in the attempt to estimate the value of the feeling element in abstraction from the other elements of consciousness. Knowing, feeling, willing are, for us at least, the three inseparable aspects of consciousness. It is upon consciousness taken as a whole that we pronounce our ultimate judgements of value; the nature of its knowledge and its will must necessarily colour and determine the value of the feeling by which in any consciousness they are accompanied.

Invariably, then, moral judgements imply facts of feeling as part of their ground—that is to say either feelings actually experienced or desires which imply feeling in the present as well as feeling in their subsequent satisfaction[1]. Those feelings need not be the feelings of the person making the judgement, and in many cases there is nothing specifically moral about them. I judge that it is wrong for me or any one else to stick pins into a human being, simply because it hurts. If I did not know that it hurts, if I did not know what pain is, I could not judge it to be a bad thing, or the act of causing it wrong. Given that knowledge, I can pronounce the act wrong, quite apart from any sympathetic or other feeling which the act may excite in myself. But sometimes we can recognize a far less superficial truth in the Moral Sense position than this. The actual ground of my judgement may be simply an emotion; and, although an emotion to which I assign value must be to some extent pleasant, I may assign it a value which is not measured by its pleasantness. I may approve of an act not merely on account of the pleasure or pain which it causes, but also on account of the emotion which it excites, the emotion from which it proceeds, or the emotion by which it is accompanied. I may approve of maternal affection not merely on account of the benefit arising to the babe and to society, but for its own sake; and that emotion, though it is a source of pleasure, is assuredly one which also causes much pain. Yet the value which we ascribe to it is certainly not smallest in those cases in which the pain is greatest. Still more closely do we approach to a recogni-

[1] What we usually call a desire I take to be a state of feeling and a certain state of will or conation combined.

tion of the specific emotion which the Moral Sense theory wishes to make the beginning and end of the ethical judgement when we take into consideration the feelings which the mere contemplation of some acts excites in a well-regulated mind, whether the mind be the agent's or that of some 'disinterested spectator[1]'—say for instance the disgust which is experienced at an isolated act of otherwise practically harmless drunkenness, or our feeling about acts of impurity. It is in cases of this sort that we can least of all ignore the fact that not merely ordinary feelings of pleasure but certain specific kinds of higher emotion do form part of the ground on which our moral judgements are based. They are part of what the moral judgement pronounces to have value. And they are judgements which could not really be pronounced by a consciousness which could not experience those emotions, which knew only on the one hand the data supplied by the senses and on the other hand the abstract axioms of the Practical Reason.

But this recognition of the absolute indispensability of certain specific emotions (in many cases) to our moral judgement does not in the least invalidate what has already been said as to the intellectual, rational, objective character of the judgement of value. The judgement that a certain emotion has value is a different thing from the mere emotion itself[2]. Without the

[1] 'For, if we once suppose the general physical basis of animal life to be seriously altered, it is impossible to say to what extent the types of sentiment and action which, under present conditions, approve themselves as life-preserving and beneficial to the individual and the species would be still in place' (Taylor, *The Problem of Conduct*, p. 41). Prof. Taylor's insistence that the details of duty would be different in different surroundings is quite justified, but he seems to me to think that this proves more than it does — that it altogether upsets any claim for objective validity or a 'rational' character in our moral judgements. But (1) it is true that I may recognize that the ferocity of the tiger is as life-preserving and beneficial to its species as the charity of the Saint; yet I need not pronounce that it has the same intrinsic value: and (2) though the judgements as to right and wrong for human nature would be different if our physical constitution were altered, that does not show that every rational intelligence, in proportion as it is rational, would not pronounce the same course of conduct to be right for man as he is. And this is what we mean by treating the moral judgement as objective.

[2] 'Notre vrai guide n'est ni l'instinct, ni une pensée transcendante, c'est la réflexion sur l'instinct' (Rauh, *L'Expérience morale*, p. 96).

a priori and purely intellectual idea of value we could never pass from the judgement 'I feel such and such an emotion' to 'it is right for me and others to do the act which excites in me this emotion'; though the judgement could equally little be pronounced by a person incapable of experiencing the emotion, or at least of understanding and respecting its existence in others through the analogy of something more or less similar in his own experience. It is not the existence of the feeling but our judgement that that feeling is good that enables us to say that the act which excites it is right or wrong. It is not merely because it is a feeling excited by conduct that it can claim any pre-eminence over other feelings. If that were so, it would have no validity except for the persons naturally disposed to feel it. But our judgement that certain conduct is wrong does not disappear because as a matter of fact we may know that it excites no such feeling of disgust or repulsion in the person guilty of it. There are doubtless individuals who really do feel no disgust whatever at isolated or even habitual acts of drunkenness (though they are probably fewer than those who merely pretend to feel none): but we do not say that on that account drunkenness is right for such men. On the contrary we say that, if a man has not got such feelings, so much the worse for him: they are feelings which he ought to have. He falls short of the ideal of manhood if he has them not[1]. There are other cases where natural feelings of disgust at particular kinds of conduct are pronounced on reflection to have no value whatever—e.g. the young medical student's sensations on first entering a dissecting room. We pronounce that such feelings should simply be got over as quickly as possible. The ultimate truth then which the Moral Sense school distorts is that in some cases a state of feeling is judged to have an absolute value, which, though more or less pleasant, is not measured merely by its pleasantness, and that such states of feeling form in and for themselves, entirely

[1] Cf. Aristotle, *Ethic. Nicomach.* III. i. § 13 (p. 1110*b*) *Ὁ γὰρ μεθύων ἢ ὀργιζόμενος οὐ δοκεῖ δι' ἄγνοιαν πράττειν . . . ἀγνοεῖ μὲν οὖν πᾶς ὁ μοχθηρὸς ἃ δεῖ πράττειν καὶ ὧν ἀφεκτέον, καὶ διὰ τὴν τοιαύτην ἁμαρτίαν ἄδικοι καὶ ὅλως κακοὶ γίνονται· τὸ δ' ἀκούσιον βούλεται λέγεσθαι οὐκ εἴ τις ἀγνοεῖ τὰ συμφέροντα· οὐ γὰρ ἐν τῇ προαιρέσει ἄγνοια αἰτία τοῦ ἀκουσίου ἀλλὰ τῆς μοχθηρίας.*

apart from any further consequences, an element in that ideal good which we recognize it as our duty to promote. I shall hereafter give other illustrations of this class of moral judgements[1], but meanwhile I should observe three things about the feelings or emotional states of the kind which I mean:

(1) Although we can give no reason why the feeling, say of human affection, should be better than a feeling of satisfaction in eating except that we judge it to be so, the feelings to which we give this kind of preference are not arbitrarily and capriciously selected. They are intimately connected with our whole conception of the proper relation of man to man—our whole conception of what human life and human society should be. The judgement cannot therefore be reduced to any sort of isolated perception involving no exercise of the percipient's intellect, and no reference or relation to other judgements or ideas. It is impossible to dissociate our condemnation of illicit sexual intercourse from our conception of monogamy as the true type of sexual relation, our approval of which is based upon a great deal besides spontaneous emotions of approval or repugnance. The conception depends upon nothing less than our whole ideal of what constitutes a desirable state of human society and of the individual human soul. We judge that the state of feeling most conducive to the maintenance of the approved type possesses an intrinsic value. We cannot in the ordinary orthodox-utilitarian fashion *prove* irregular sexual relations to be wrong because they tend to prevent marriage and the growth of population; for it depends upon many circumstances whether they have that effect, and whether or not that effect is in itself to be regretted. Our condemnation of fornication, in spite of the diminution of pleasure which its prohibition undoubtedly involves, is not a deduction from a judgement about marriage resting on Utilitarian grounds, but simply one side or aspect of that ideal of life which prescribes both the monogamous marriage and the rule of purity before marriage. That ideal condemns sexual indulgence except where it can be made instrumental and subordinate to higher and more spiritual affections. When certain states of feeling appear to be selected for approval or condemnation by

[1] See Chap. vii.

a kind of instinct which can give no further account of itself, these are, in so far as they persist after the fullest reflection, not merely isolated feelings of approval or disapprobation such as the deliverances of the Moral Sense are sometimes supposed to be, but feelings which are elements in a single, interconnected, articulated ideal of human life. And ideals are recognized as such by the intellect, however much (in some cases) the existence of certain feelings or emotions may be the condition of such a recognition. So again when I condemn drunkenness, my judgement implies a whole conception of human life—that man is a rational being, adapted for certain ends, responsible for his actions, possessed of a certain worth or dignity, having such and such relations to his fellows, capable of certain intellectual and moral activities, activities which are interfered with and impeded by drunkenness. This whole ideal of what man is and ought to be is implied in my judgement that it is intrinsically degrading and unworthy of a rational being voluntarily to place himself in a state in which he is not master of his own actions, however elaborate the precautions which he may take against doing harm to himself and others when in that condition. The feeling of repugnance to the act is inseparable from a whole complex of judgements about human life and its purposes which are very different from isolated emotions. So again with such an obviously unutilitarian precept as that which condemns cannibalism. Clearly if the victim is not killed on purpose to be eaten, cannibalism under certain circumstances might present itself as an eminently sanitary and economical arrangement. If we judge that man ought to endure considerable privation—some would perhaps say even extreme privation—rather than eat human flesh, it is because we feel that this external reverence to a human corpse is an expression of a reverence for humanity which possesses a higher value than the momentary relief from hunger. It is impossible to isolate our condemnation of cannibalism from our whole ideal of the proper relation of man to his fellow men. The psychologically very similar feeling against dissection which long stood in the way of surgical progress we decline to encourage because it is inconsistent with an enlightened ideal of human life as a whole.

(2) And these considerations do involve the recognition of a principle which is constantly forgotten by Rationalists of the Kantian type. It is quite true that the question of what is moral for man depends upon his actual psychical constitution, including his sensitive, aesthetic, and emotional nature. If it is said that moral judgements are in a sense *a priori*, that must not be taken to mean that we could define the rules of human conduct without an empirically derived knowledge of the actual constitution of human nature, and of human society. That it is right to promote the true good of all that lives and is conscious is, indeed, an *a priori* truth which Reason can recognize without any appeal to empirical knowledge except what is implied in the idea of conscious life: but what actually is for the good of man or any other creature cannot be ascertained without a knowledge of the nature and capacities of that creature. The prohibition of shooting would be irrational among beings who were 'like the air, invulnerable': the law of marriage and all that flows from it presupposes the sexual difference itself—not merely the physical difference, but all the emotional and moral differences—between man and woman. It would be absurd to attempt an answer to the question what would be the best type of sexual union if human beings were not so constituted that man's feelings towards woman are different from those with which he regards his own sex, if men and women were not naturally inclined towards permanent and exclusive unions[1], if emotions of the highest and

[1] The researches of Prof. Westermarck (*History of Human Marriage*) tend to confirm Aristotle's dictum that man is *τῇ φύσει συνδυαστικὸν μᾶλλον ἢ πολιτικόν*. This is proved partly by inference from the fact that the higher apes are monogamous, partly by a wide induction from anthropological and historical facts. Polyandry is a rare, Polygamy a much more common institution, but both are exceptional arrangements due to special circumstances. The later work of Messrs. Spencer and Gillen (*The Native Tribes of Central Australia*) may be held to modify Prof. Westermarck's conclusions, but the most that they point to is a system of group-marriages, not the sheer promiscuity of McLellan's speculations; and after all, even in those marriages, one husband occupies an exceptional position. Even here a *tendency* to Monogamy is discernible. The great difficulty experienced by otherwise successful 'free-love' communities in America is the ineradicable tendency to form exclusive unions. But of course these facts are intended rather as an illustration than as a proof of the position taken up in the text.

purest type were not found to be subtly and inseparably connected with such unions, and so on.

(3) I may add that the passing of judgements of this kind often demands for its full justification an amount of experience which is quite beyond the reach of a single individual. The monogamous ideal of life is based upon the accumulated experience of the human race, not merely the experience of the numerical majority; it is doubtful, indeed, whether the independent verdict of the numerical majority, even in those countries which have not frankly abandoned the Christian ideal in this matter, would really endorse this judgement, but for the deference paid to the verdict of the best men which is based upon the results of all the experience within their reach, experience of themselves and others, experience of the good results of the observance and the bad results of the non-observance of the monogamous rule. But by experience of good and bad results I do not mean, of course, mere pleasure and pain. It is upon the whole spiritual condition which results from the control as compared with the whole spiritual condition which results from the non-control of these particular passions that the judgement of value is pronounced. And the dependence of these judgements upon an experience which cannot well be possessed by the young makes this department of morality peculiarly dependent in practice upon respect for moral authority [1]. I shall return to this matter in a chapter which will be specially devoted to the place of Authority in Ethics. It is sufficient here to note that there are many departments of Morality in which it must be recognized that the judgements of the individual—at least of ordinary individuals, and of all individuals as regards a large part of their lives—are and must be largely influenced by Authority. No prejudice is done by this admission to the final and paramount authority of the moral consciousness: for this authority to which the appeal is made (when it is rightly made) is simply

[1] This authority is not necessarily or exclusively that of a religious creed, a religious teacher, or a religious community: but this is the most definite and conspicuous form which moral authority actually assumes in modern times. This dependence is, I believe, one explanation of the undoubted fact that this is a department of morality which is peculiarly liable to suffer from the decay of religious belief.

that of the moral consciousness in a higher stage of development, or of the moral consciousness working upon an experience which is wider and fuller than that of the isolated average individual.

Two very opposite schools of thought are apt to deny or ignore the truth that the content of our moral judgements is dependent upon the sensitive and emotional as well as the rational nature of man. It is often forgotten by the ordinary Utilitarian. He does not of course refuse to take into account the experience that such and such things bring pleasure, but he does sometimes fail to take into account tendencies to particular emotions, spontaneous tendencies to approve of certain kinds of conduct and to disapprove of others, which rest upon no logical ground, but must simply be taken as data upon which the Practical Reason has to work. The hedonistic assumption that all a man's desires are really desires for pleasure favours the delusion that desires can be created or extinguished or modified at will, if only you can show that good hedonistic results would be attained by doing so. On the other hand the rationalistic Moralist often forgets that the raw material, so to speak, upon which Practical Reason pronounces its judgements of value and which it works up into ideals must always be supplied by the actual experiences, emotions, desires, tendencies and aspirations of human nature. The judgement that the tendency of human nature to find satisfaction in certain kinds of conduct has value is, indeed, an immediate judgement which cannot be derived from experience in the ordinary sense of the word; but we very often cannot say why we should have such a tendency, or deny that in beings differently constituted other kinds of conduct might tend to their highest attainable good[1].

[1] Von Hartmann is one of the few idealistic Moralists who have adequately remembered this. Man, according to him, gets his notions of the End 'from the application of Reason to the actual course of events, including the subjective moral motives of men' ('aus der Anwendung der Vernunft auf den gesamten Weltlauf einschliesslich der subjektiven sittlichen Veranlagung der Menschen.' *Ethische Studien*, p. 181). At the same time, when he goes on to call the process of arriving at the ideal end 'inductive,' he seems to ignore the fundamental difference between recognizing a value in the various elements of which the end is made up, and that of merely asserting their actual

The question is raised, for instance, whether the received view of the mutual duties of parents and children, brothers and sisters, can be justified by a purely Utilitarian calculation. Can it be shown to be conducive to the greatest happiness of the greatest number? Waiving the difference between a hedonistic and a non-hedonistic conception of happiness, nothing is easier than to show the practical advantages of the arrangement, if you assume the actual tendency of the human mother to feel for her own offspring the most passionate of human affections, the actual tendency of all human beings to feel a stronger attachment to their own near kin than to strangers, and consequently to recognize a stronger claim upon their Benevolence. Given this tendency, the encouragement of it leads both to unselfishness in parents and to the proper bringing up of

existence. He seems sometimes (ib., p. 192) to fall into the mistake of trying to form a conception of the ethical end by induction from the actual empirically ascertained tendency of the Universe, the fallacy of which has been sufficiently pointed out by Mr. Herbert Spencer's critics. That moral Reason can deal with data which it cannot itself supply or create, no one (among ethical Rationalists) appreciates better than von Hartmann. 'Diese Norm ist ein Produkt der Vernunft, ein Ideal, welches zeigt, wie der Mensch eigentlich sein sollte. Aber dieses Ideal ist nicht ein systematisch aus irgend welchem anderen Prinzip abgeleitetes, sondern ein Komplex von unmittelbaren Gefühls- oder Geschmacksurteilen' (ib., p. 94). He points out too that in time this reasonable criticism of, and selection, among our desires modifies the feelings themselves (ib., p. 199). The only point in this statement to which I should demur is that he seems disposed to identify the 'judgement of taste' with mere feeling, which would leave to the Reason nothing but the function of collecting and combining the actual feelings of the judger—a mode of thought quite inconsistent with the whole of his powerful plea for an absolute or rational standard of Morality. Reason must not merely collect and systematize, but select and value the different elements of human experience.

It is surprising to find how blind naturalistic Moralists continue to be to the fact that the real problem of Ethics is as to how we determine or ought to determine the ultimate end. This problem is wholly ignored in such works as M. Lévy-Bruhl's *La Morale et la Science des mœurs* (1904), the main idea of which is that the Science of the means to the end should be based upon Sociology (or a complex of sociological Sciences): how the end is to be discovered and what are the metaphysical implications of the idea of an 'end' are questions which he does not ask. There is no indication in an otherwise clever work that its author is capable of even understanding their meaning.

children. On the other hand, put out of sight the *de facto* emotional constitution of human nature, and nothing could be easier than to demonstrate the disadvantages arising from these narrow family attachments, and the infinite hedonistic and moral superiority of a society in which all older men should be regarded as fathers, all equals as brothers. So Plato argued, and he was only wrong because he supposed that Reason could pronounce moral judgements without any appeal to the actual emotional tendencies of human nature, or because he supposed that human nature was more modifiable than it is. The Moral Sense school are right in holding that our moral judgements are partly dependent upon the feelings and emotions with which we do naturally regard conduct of various kinds, and that these must be taken account of before we pronounce whether that conduct is to be regarded as right or wrong. It would be impossible to show that it is a more imperative duty to relieve suffering at our own door than suffering at a distance, if it were not an actual tendency of human nature to feel a readier and deeper sympathy with the suffering that one actually beholds: and so on[1]. This last illustration may help to suggest the importance of the opposite side of ethical truth. While Reason must take account of those actual feelings and emotions which form part of our moral nature before pronouncing by what means most good will be realized, we cannot allow the actual strength of the feeling to be the sole test of moral approval or disapproval. Moral progress consists very largely in substituting deliberate thought-out judgements for casual and variable emotions: and the exercise of Reason in time reacts upon the emotions themselves. When we have come intellectually to recognize the claims of suffering which we do not see, we may come to feel for it a sympathy which is something very different from, and very much more powerful as a motive for action than, the bare intellectual recognition that the worth of a human being must

[1] Hume was right in insisting that in average human nature (apart from the influence of logical reflection or rational consideration) 'the qualities of the mind are selfishness and limited generosity' (*Treatise*, Book III, Pt. ii, § 2).

be quite independent of geographical considerations or ethnological affinities. Even moral feeling must be guided and controlled by Reason; to a very large extent, indeed, the difference between 'higher' and 'lower' feeling consists precisely in the difference between mere feeling as it exists in merely non-moral natures and feeling in the form which it assumes when guided and controlled by human Reason. The judgement of value which Reason pronounces is not dictated by the feelings, but the actual feelings supply the materials which it uses in building up a consistent and harmonious ideal of human life. Reason cannot invent new feelings, but it can so regulate human conduct as to produce a maximum of those in which it recognizes most value, and that regulation of conduct tends in time to produce actual feeling in accordance with the ideal which Reason sets up.

V

The objections to the Moral Sense view of Ethics are substantially the same as those which must be urged against the systems which represent the moral faculty as something *sui generis*—neither Reason nor feeling. Bishop Butler discerned, as we have seen[1], the fundamental defect of all mere Moral Sense theories—that they could assign no reason why this feeling of the Moral Sense should be accorded any superiority over other feelings. A Moral Sense can have no authority: authority is of the essence of Conscience. To Bishop Butler himself, at least when he wrote his Sermons, the authority of Conscience was, it is probable, simply the authority of Reason. His habitual synonym for Conscience is a 'principle of Reflection': at times he explicitly calls it Reason. But some of his disciples—of whom Dr. Martineau is the most distinguished representative—decline to admit this identification. It is so exceedingly difficult to grasp the idea of a 'faculty' which is neither part of our intellectual nature nor yet any kind of feeling or emotion that the view is not easy to criticize. It may be enough perhaps to quote Martineau's statement of his position and to point out the source of the confusion into which he seems to fall:

[1] See above, p. 144, *note*.

'And when, in order to scrutinise their relation, we lay them side by side and look at their contents, we see at once that the features, present in approval and absent from assent are precisely the whole of the *moral* characteristics, whence the judgement derives its ethical quality. In my assent to the proposition that any two radii vectores of an ellipse, meeting at their peripheral extremities, are together equal to the transverse axis, and my dissent from the assertion that they are always equal to one another, I have none of the self-contentment and of the compunction respectively involved in my right and wrong volitions; I assign no *merit* to the truth, no *demerit* to the error, or to the mind that is subject to them; were my belief rewarded, I should be ashamed of the absurdity: were my misbelief punished, I should resent the injustice. But these experiences, which fail to attend the *Yes* and *No* of Reason, are the sum of the moral sentiments which attend the *Yes* and *No* of Conscience. There is nothing, therefore, in common except the naked fact of acceptance or rejection; the thing accepted or rejected, it is plain, is wholly different[1].'

There is much virtue in that 'nothing except.' All that Dr. Martineau's objections really show is that the moral judgement is an essentially different kind of judgement from any other: they do not show that it is not a judgement. When a piece of conduct is pronounced 'rational' or 'reasonable,' something else no doubt is meant than when a conclusion is pronounced logically to follow from its premisses. If we treat 'reasonable' and 'right' as synonyms, that does not imply that we do not recognize the enormous difference between 'reasonable' or 'reasonable to think' and 'reasonable to be done.' In this sense it is quite true there is an element present in the moral judgement and absent in the mathematical. It does not follow that this element is simply 'the glow of emotion,' though such a glow may be a more or less inseparable accompani-

[1] *Types of Ethical Theory*, 3rd ed., vol. II, p. 473. Cf. also the admission 'In one sense, every experience of our nature might be pronounced intellectual. . . . Passion and emotion themselves are, in us, not without thought, and may be always treated as *thought in a glow*' (p. 468). If there is thought in our moral perception, there must be thought about something, and that something cannot be just the fact of the perception itself.

ment of the judgement. Nothing can be more important than to emphasize the *sui generis* character of the moral judgement, that is to say of that idea of goodness or value which forms its essence. But that does not show the necessity for inventing a separate faculty to give such judgements. We are not confusing time with space because we assign to our ideas of both an intellectual origin. We may if we like call Practical Reason a separate faculty from speculative Reason—that is only a question of words. We really mean simply that they are distinguishable aspects of one and the same rational self. The important thing is that we should recognize that moral judgements possess an absolute truth or falsity, which is equally valid for all rational beings[1]; and, if that is recognized, it seems most natural to ascribe them to Reason.

Much the same line of objection to the rationalistic position has been followed in a more recent attempt to rehabilitate the old Moral Sense view of Ethics, or something like it, made by the late Professor Gizycki. His line of argument seems to me to imply the same misunderstandings, and to demand the same concessions, as the old English 'Moral Sense' view and Dr. Martineau's Philosophy of Conscience. But there is one objection made by Gizycki which demands an additional word of explanation. It is really strange to find an eminent Professor of Philosophy solemnly arguing that, if the rationalistic view were true, 'the most intellectual man would be the best morally, and the least intelligent would be the worst[2].' Here in the first place I notice the confusion already pointed out—between what tells a man his duty and what makes him do it. Men of genius may see their duty clearly enough, but they do not always do it. Nobody could discourse more beautifully about Morality than Goethe or Coleridge. But this is not all. It is not even true

[1] True for all rational beings, not equally binding on all rational beings. All rational beings must recognize them as binding on beings constituted as man is constituted. The essential principles of morality must no doubt be the same for all such beings, but not its detail.

[2] *An Introduction to the Study of Ethics*, adapted from the German of G. M. Gizycki by Stanton Coit, Ph.D., 1891, p. 87; a work which had already appeared in 1889 under the title 'A Student's Manual of Ethical Philosophy.'

that, on the rationalistic principle, the most intelligent man must know his duty best. For 'intelligence' has many branches or departments, or aspects. The man who has mathematical capacity may be singularly wanting in the gift of language or expression; he may be wholly blind to the beauty of Art or of Poetry; while the Artist and the Scholar may be exceptionally unmathematical. Poets have often been entirely unmusical. Roughly speaking perhaps the possession of superior mental capacity in one direction may be held generally to carry with it something more than average capacity in others; but to this rule there are many exceptions. In the same way it may be roughly—very roughly—true that men of superior ability are on the whole more capable of moral appreciation (and even perhaps more moral in practice) than men of inferior mental capacity. We may distrust the speculations about a distinctly criminal type of brain, but it is certain that professional criminals are usually people of very low mental capacity, though a few are men of great intellectual ability. At the same time it is perfectly possible, and often happens, that the particular capacity for apprehending the distinction between right and wrong may be possessed by persons not otherwise remarkable for intellect; while intellectual persons are occasionally very deficient in this respect. This might be admitted even by the straitest sect of ethical Rationalism. But in these pages it has been further contended that, though the apprehension of moral distinctions is in itself an intellectual act, the exercise of this intellectual capacity is often conditioned by and postulates a certain emotional endowment. Some of our ethical judgements could not be given at all were a certain emotion absent; and, given the emotion, the ethical judgement is often a very simple affair: but intellectual judgements are not the less intellectual because they lie within the capacity of very 'unintellectual' persons. It is much the same, I suppose, with the aesthetic faculty. The intellectual character of the musical faculty—its close connexion with the capacity for the most abstract kind of thinking—is attested by the tendency of musical and mathematical talent to go together. Yet intellect alone will not make a Musician; musical originality or even high musical appreciation presupposes

a capacity for certain kinds of emotion, which the Mathematician may lack. So with the moral faculty; it belongs to the intellect, yet it may be paralysed or perverted by want of emotional capacity. This has often been the case probably with enthusiasts and fanatics—men of exceptional sense of duty or exceptional devotion to ideals of one kind or another, but little human affection. Some persons may have little delicacy of moral judgement for want of the original capacity for emotion. Still more often may people who possess perhaps in a high degree all the intellectual capacities required for giving judgements of value exhibit small moral insight in actual life, because through their own personal failure in right willing, or through their unfavourable moral environment, they have not acted up to such light as they had. The Reason that judges and the will that acts are not one and the same thing, but they are only two sides of one and the same self, and they do most powerfully act and react upon one another. The maxim 'obedience is the organ of spiritual knowledge' has been abused in the interests of obscurantism and fanaticism, but it represents nevertheless a most important fact in Moral Psychology[1].

VI

To some minds it will probably appear that I have inadequately stated the intimacy of the connexion between the rational judgement of value and the emotions by which it is normally accompanied. There are Moralists who, agreeing that the idea of value is logically distinguishable from the emotion with which right conduct is contemplated, will insist that *de facto* they are so inseparable that the moral judgement could not be made by, and could have no meaning for, a mind destitute of the specific moral emotion. 'I think,' writes a friend who takes this view[2], 'that the "reason" and "feeling" which are to be found in moral judgments, though no doubt distinguishable, are not only always found together, but each is unintelligible and empty apart from

[1] Cf. Aristotle's *ἡ κακία φθαρτικὴ ἀρχῆς.*

[2] I cannot call to mind any printed expression of this doctrine, though it is taught by high authorities in Oxford—a fact which must be my apology for quoting a private letter.

the other. The judgement "this is right" is not a moral judgement unless one has, more or less, the moral emotion (for in the judgement "this is right," when the ground is any authority, the moral emotion and the judgment proper fall upon the authority, not strictly upon the particular point), nor is it a moral emotion unless it claims universality. This, I think, is the same view as yours, but perhaps you might more carefully avoid the use of language which suggests juxtaposition (reason + feeling); which is surely unsatisfactory, and leads to what one finds inadequate in the language of Hume on one side and Kant on another.' To such a line of criticism I should reply as follows:

(1) With regard to the suggestion about mere 'juxtaposition,' I have very definitely admitted that in all cases some feeling is, in part, the ground of the judgement. That being so, the judgement could not be made without the feeling, but the feeling which is the ground of a moral judgement is, in my view, *not always* any specifically moral or 'higher' kind of feeling. In some cases the judgement implies a particular kind of 'higher' emotion, but not in all. In some cases the only feeling which is implied as the ground of the judgement is simple pleasure and pain, not in ourselves but in others, though without some experience of them in ourselves we should not know what they are in others. To know that this act causes pain in others is all that I want to enable me to condemn it. That pain is the negation of good, and that the good ought to be promoted, are self-evident truths perceivable by the intellect. How far in actual fact there exist persons so constituted as to be capable of seeing that truth without experiencing the smallest emotional repulsion against causing pain, or the smallest inclination to avoid it themselves, is a question of empirical Psychology on which I should not like to pronounce a decided opinion. But I see nothing self-contradictory in the supposition that there may be such persons. There certainly seem to be persons who do make this judgement, but in whom ethical emotion and ethical inclination are so small as in no way to account for the judgement being made.

(2) And even in persons who are not altogether incapable of moral emotion, some moral judgements are not as a matter of

fact accompanied by any emotion at all, though the same judgement may on other occasions call forth emotion of great strength. The proposition that pleasure is good and pain bad—or that some particular trifling pleasure of my own is good and conduct which interferes with it wrong in myself or in another—is one that can be assented to without any emotion whatever; and yet that proposition is the ultimate ground for my condemnation of some act of cruelty which might excite in me feelings of warm indignation. And I regard it as a matter of great theoretical importance to insist that the intellectual categories of good and right are as distinctly present in the cool and calculating judgement that it is unreasonable to throw away a large pleasure for a smaller one (no matter whose that pleasure be), as in our enthusiastic approval of some heroic act of self-sacrifice.

(3) Of course we can, if we choose, include in our idea of good and evil, right and wrong, the emotion which they excite in normally constituted persons, or even all the varieties of emotion that they may excite in abnormally constituted persons. On the principle that we do not know a thing fully till we know all its relations, it may no doubt be said that we do not *fully* understand the meaning of right and wrong unless we do take into account these facts of our emotional nature. To a person incapable of any such emotion the terms would no doubt not mean all that they mean to one who is capable of it. But I am not prepared to admit that it would mean nothing to him. Not only would it mean something to him, but that something is, I should hold, the very essence of the moral judgement, considered simply as a judgement. The ideas of good and evil, right and wrong, seem to be as distinguishable in thought from any emotion accompanying them as the idea of a circle is from the aesthetic feeling which may perhaps be in fact its inseparable accompaniment. To insist upon the greater practical importance of the feeling attending the moral judgement would be wholly beside the point.

(4) The contention that the term 'right' means nothing apart from the emotions by which moral judgements at the higher levels of moral experience are usually accompanied seems to me open to a further objection. I am unable to recognize the

existence of any one particular specifically 'moral' emotion[1]. An intellectual category must be one and the same for all intelligences, though there may be a greater or less degree of clearness, explicitness, and adequacy in the apprehension of it at different stages of intellectual development. But emotion is essentially a variable and subjective thing. And the emotion excited by good or bad conduct, and by the judgements of moral approbation or disapprobation which they call forth, are no exception to the rule. These emotions are different in the case of different races, different individuals, different periods of life. Even in the same individual they vary from day to day with our changing moods and circumstances. The emotions which different kinds of good or bad conduct excite are very different, even when the intellectual approval or disapproval is the same. Few people approve an act of commonplace Justice with the warmth which they bestow on an act of Generosity, and yet Justice is quite as important as Generosity. When I judge a massacre to be wrong, my judgement is exactly the same whether it has been committed by Englishmen on Englishmen in the streets of London, or by Chinamen on Chinamen in the streets of Pekin, but my emotion would probably be very different both in kind and intensity. Even with characters of exceptional moral earnestness, there is every reason to suppose that the emotion accompanying their ethical thinking must be of very different kinds. It is improbable that a mind of John Wesley's severity could ever have felt the tender humanity of St. Francis of Assisi, or that in a man of sympathetic nature like John Stuart Mill the sense of duty assumed the emotional tone with which it was invested in the Philosopher whose personal character has stamped itself for ever upon the doctrine of the 'categorical imperative.' To say that the category of value or of duty was present in the mind of Mill as much as in that of Kant, however little the Metaphysic of the former may have recognized its presence, is an assertion which I understand and accept. Whether the emotional accom-

[1] 'Es giebt demnach nicht ein bestimmtes Gefühl, welches als moralisches Gefühl von allen anderen Gefühlen verschieden wäre, sondern jedes Gefühl entspricht in seiner Tendenz mehr oder minder sittlichen Aufgaben, oder es widerspricht denselben in höherem oder geringerem Grade' (Von Hartmann, *Das sittl. Bewusstsein*, p. 148).

paniments of their judgements were the same is a psychological question which it would be a piece of the most unwarrantable dogmatism to determine *a priori*. If, therefore, the assertion that a moral emotion claims universality means that the same emotion must be present in all moral persons, I see no ground for the assumption. Nor, indeed, in strictness can I understand the meaning of asserting that any emotion whatever 'claims universality.' That, when I recognize a value in a certain emotion, my judgement claims universality I admit; but I recognize the probability that many different kinds of moral emotion may possess a high degree of intrinsic worth, and I see no reason for selecting one particular type of it as the one and only 'moral emotion,' in the absence of which the judgement could not be moral at all. It may no doubt be urged that the ideal man would feel exactly the same kind of emotion on the same occasions. That would be a somewhat difficult contention, inasmuch as a certain limitation, and therefore a certain individuality, seems essential to a nature that is to be truly human. But, whatever may be thought of this point, the assertion supplies no ground for saying that the judgement is not in thought quite distinguishable from the emotion. The ideal man might be unable to think of universal gravitation without profound 'cosmic emotion,' but that supplies no reason for declaring that a Physicist who has never felt a moment's 'cosmic emotion' in his life must be ignorant of universal gravitation.

(5) It is only, as I have already pointed out, in the case of certain particular ethical judgements (not in all) that they simply cannot be made by a consciousness incapable of certain emotions: here where that is so, the judgements turn upon the actual value of the emotions as elements in human life. A consciousness which was entirely lacking in all the higher feelings—aesthetic, intellectual, social, moral—to which the developed moral consciousness assigns value, would assuredly have a limited and distorted moral ideal, but it does not follow that it would attach no meaning at all to the ideas of right and wrong, or be unable to pronounce correctly upon simple problems of elementary Morality. It might still for instance be able to recognize the wrongness of the individual deliberately preferring his own

interest to that of the community, and to apply that judgement to many particular cases.

(6) It may even be admitted that those judgements which do not psychologically depend upon the presence of emotion are not very likely ever to be made—to say nothing of the respect paid to them—by a mind totally destitute of the emotions which naturally accompany them. If the human mind could ever be a passionless thinking machine, it might indeed be contended that the emotionless man would be a particularly good judge of right and wrong in respect of those questions—questions for instance of Justice in the distribution of pleasure—which lay within its range. But no mind can ever enjoy a passionless vision of Reality. In the mind which is (relatively or absolutely) devoid of moral or social feeling, the place of such feelings is sure to be taken by other feelings, emotions, and desires, which must necessarily distort the moral judgement or totally prevent its exercise. Even our most abstract thinking is dominated by purpose or interest of some kind. Minds which take no interest in Morality do not think about it at all. I see no reason why for instance a person incapable of moral emotion should not be able to recognize the injustice of slavery, though he might have felt no inclination to agitate for its abolition. But we know that as a matter of fact the minds which first pronounced slavery to be wrong were minds dominated by a passion for Justice and an ardent love of Humanity. In minds which have no such passion, indifference may prevent any judgement whatever, or any serious judgement, upon the problem; interest may suggest wrong judgements.

This doctrine of the inseparability of the moral judgement from one particular kind of emotion seems to me not only unwarrantable in itself, but dangerous in its theoretical tendency: for it obscures the fact that the judgement of value by which I recognize that my own pleasure is a reasonable end of pursuit is exactly the same in its intellectual character as our recognition of an intrinsic value in heroism or saintliness, although the emotional accompaniments of the two judgements may be very different. It is true no doubt that the amount of value which we recognize in the former case is much smaller

than that which we recognize in the latter. To the pleasure which it is right to pursue we assign value: but we do not attribute much intrinsic value to the will which wills that pleasure unless the preference of the pleasure implies devotion to some higher kind of good, or to the good as such, on the part of the agent; and this is commonly the case only when the pleasure aimed at is not the agent's own, since only in this case is there usually present any strong temptation to pursue some other end, though we may ascribe some small value to the preference even of private interest to mere brute passion. Conduct directed towards the good is right whether it implies Virtue on the part of the agent or not: but such conduct need not possess value in any appreciable degree. The value may often lie in the end or consequences, not in the act itself. And the term moral value is commonly reserved for the value that we attribute to character—to the good will or at least to inclinations and dispositions, desires and emotions, which we recognize as conducive to or resulting from a settled bent of the will towards the good[1]. It is important no doubt to insist on the superior value which we ascribe to such preference for the good. But the two kinds of value are not absolutely incommensurable. However much superior the value of a good act may be to that of a transitory pleasure, we still use the term 'value' of both, and we use it in the same sense: the two kinds of value differ as being at the top and the bottom of the same scale, not as representing two totally incommensurable scales. There can be only one ultimate scale of values, however heterogeneous the objects which we appraise by that scale. Thus to the actual relief of pain and healing of wounds which resulted to the man fallen among thieves from the act of the good Samaritan we assign value. If it were not good for wounds to be healed, it would not have been *right* for the good Samaritan to heal them; but we should not call the injured

[1] Prof. Taylor seems to me to forget this use of the term 'moral value' when he declares, without qualification, that 'it is quite impossible, after the fashion of popular philosophy, to draw a line between qualities that are moral and qualities that are not so. Whatever is felt by men to be *worth* having at all has, *eo ipso*, moral value, or rather, moral value is a tautologous expression' (*Problem of Conduct*, p. 297).

man's feeling *morally* good. On the other hand, to the good Samaritan's act we assign 'moral value,' and we may even assign moral value to the emotion which prompted, or to the pleasure which resulted from the act, even though the emotion and the pleasure may not have been under the immediate control of the will, because it would be an indication of character or of a settled bent of the will. Such is the ordinary usage of language. The distinction between 'moral value' and 'value' is no doubt one of great practical importance, inasmuch as it implies a conviction of the supreme and unique value of a rightly directed will. But there is not the absolute disparity between them that is suggested by the idea of a distinctively moral emotion in the absence of which our judgements as to the value of this or that element of human life could not be moral judgements at all.

It has been contended in this chapter that 'the moral faculty' is essentially Reason. By that is meant that the ideas of Right and Wrong, Good and Evil, are intellectual concepts or categories which cannot be reduced to any kind or sort of mere feeling. But it has been fully admitted that practically the power of deciding between right and wrong involves many emotional elements, and these are certainly included in what is popularly spoken of as Conscience. Conscience or (to speak more scientifically) the moral consciousness may be held to include not merely the capacity of pronouncing moral judgements, but the whole body of instincts, feelings, emotions, desires which are presupposed by and which influence these judgements, as well as those which prompt to the doing of the actions which they prescribe[1]. No more accurate definition can be given, because the 'moral faculty' cannot actually exist apart from the other elements of self-consciousness. The Practical Reason implies all the other activities of Reason and would be impossible without them; and it implies also, not a mere single specific feeling or emotion, but a whole complex of feelings and

[1] Another element in what is commonly called Conscience is simply the individual's consciousness of the fact that he is or is not doing what he himself believes to be right. 'It perceives whether those [actions] it judges right, or those it judges wrong, are actually adopted' (Shadworth Hodgson, *Philosophy of Experience*, vol. IV, p. 86).

emotions upon the value of which the Practical Reason has to pronounce. 'Conscience' or the moral consciousness is a name for a particular aspect of the single self which is thought and feeling and will. Morality would be impossible and meaningless, or at least defective and one-sided, for a being in whom any one of these elements were wanting[1].

[1] It may be broadly stated that all recent moralists who approach the subject from a purely psychological point of view tend to agree with the Moral Sense position in making Morality ultimately to rest upon feeling, though they may be less clear about the specific and distinctive character of the feeling. To Höffding for instance the value-judgement is simply a feeling, arising largely from Sympathy (*Ethik*, pp. 41, 72, &c.); the categorical imperative is 'an instinct' (ib., p. 55). Though quite aware that this position involves the sacrifice of all objective character for moral judgements, he seems to me constantly to use language and to express ideas which imply such an objectivity. Simmel insists strongly on the fact that the 'ought' is an ultimate and unanalysable category of our thought, but makes the whole *content* of the 'ought' come from feeling (*Einleitung in die Moralwissenschaft*, Berlin, 1892, I, pp. 23 *sq.*, 54, 239, &c.). But it is difficult to see how it is possible to assert the validity of a category (and if it is a category of *thought* its validity can hardly be denied) without any power to apply it to a matter or to give it a content. Such an assertion would seem to be like maintaining that we have indeed a category of quantity or number, but are quite incapable of counting. Granted that our judgements in detail are liable to be influenced by all sorts of psychological considerations, just as subjective motives constantly lead to numerical miscalculations (e. g. of the numbers present at a meeting in which we are interested), it is difficult to see how there can be a category which we cannot validly use at all. After all the category of *ought* in general is simply an abstraction got by comparing together actual judgements of value. If what is contended is that we do *think* values but that such judgements possess no objective validity, the reply to it must simply be the general metaphysical reply to all Scepticism. Much of Simmel's polemic against Rationalism in Ethics seems to turn upon the old confusion between Reason and reasoning (e. g. in *Einleitung*, I, pp. 98–99); at the same time he has done a service by pointing out with much acuteness and vivacity some of the psychological causes which as a matter of fact do largely determine our actual moral judgements, e. g. our tendency to assume that the usual or normal conduct of our society is the right course. But it is perhaps a mistake to take Simmel's use of the term 'category' too seriously. It appears that ultimately the category of 'end' (practically identical with that of 'ought') is a merely 'subjective' category (II, p. 347, &c.) which would seem to mean that we have a confused idea of an 'ought' which we take to mean something, but which is of no more objective significance than the idea of 'Kismet' or that of a Centaur, though (like those ideas) it may influence human conduct. But the admission that as a matter

of psychological fact these ideas of 'ought,' 'end,' 'the good,' &c., do exist, and cannot be resolved into something else, represents a great advance on the crude Psychology which simply explained them as 'fear of tribal vengeance,' or the like. When writers like Simmel deny their objective validity, they do so as sceptical or sensationalistic metaphysicians, not as observers of psychological fact. These admissions become particularly valuable when we turn to the philosophical fireworks of such a writer as Guyau (*Esquisse d'une Morale sans obligation ni sanction*), whose original discovery seems to be that any factor of our consciousness which he cannot explain on the assumptions of his own Philosophy may be got rid of by the simple device of calling it 'mystical.'

NOTE ON THE AESTHETIC JUDGEMENT

A chapter on the relation between the moral and the aesthetic judgement might have formed a natural and desirable sequel to the treatment of 'Reason and Feeling' in Ethics, but I do not feel that my acquaintance with Aesthetic Philosophy enables me to undertake it. A few remarks on the subject may, however, be useful with a view to clearing up what has been said in the preceding chapter, and to prevent misunderstanding.

(1) I distinctly recognize an objective element in our aesthetic judgements. That is implied in our strong conviction that there is a right and a wrong about such judgements. They too, like moral judgements, are in a sense judgements of value. But I do not say that they are 'objective' in exactly the same sense and to the same extent as the ethical judgement. For they seem to be more closely connected with the variable physiological organization of individuals than ethical judgements. It has been suggested, for instance, that the restful feeling of green for human beings is due to effects on the human eye and nerves of its frequency in Nature—especially for our arboreal ancestors; while the effect of red ('like the sound of a trumpet,' to quote the famous remark of a man blind from his birth) is due to its infrequency in Nature. By beings with a different evolutionary history, therefore, a red landscape with a few touches of green would, it may be contended, be pronounced as beautiful, and beautiful in the same way, as we think a landscape of predominant green with a few touches of red. So again the beauty of a Gothic window as compared with a square one may plausibly be connected with the frequency of the Gothic arch in woods and the rarity of square arches in Nature. Even if such theories are well founded, they do not destroy the existence of an objective element in our aesthetic judgements. The perfect intelligence might still pronounce the aesthetic feeling which we experience good, though in beings otherwise constituted other aesthetic experiences might be good also. It may be contended that we have something parallel to this in the moral laws which are obviously applicable only to beings constituted like man, though the good for such beings may be something in which every rational intelligence would recognize value. But then I for one should contend that the

more ultimate of our moral judgements, such as that which recognizes the value of love, are independent of such differences in the structure of individuals or of society (see Bk. III, chap. iii), and represent not merely what all rational beings would pronounce valuable in us, but an element of experience which must exist and have value in all higher minds and in God. It may be that we might say the same of aesthetic judgements—that the value which may be recognized in aesthetic judgements which differ and even contradict one another in detail, might all be referable to some higher principles of aesthetic judgement which would explain them all; but we can form a less distinct conception of such principles than we can of the fundamental moral laws. I cannot undertake to discuss the matter here, but will only notice that aesthetic judgements (as we know them in human beings) do seem to be more intimately connected with, and inseparable from, sensations which presuppose a particular physiological organization than the most fundamental moral judgements, although I do not regard that fact as any reason for denying that they are in a true sense objective.

(2) If the moral judgement is essentially a judgement of value, its sphere must be absolutely all-embracing. There can be no department of human life, no kind of human consciousness or experience, upon which the moral Reason may not pronounce its judgements of value. People in whom aesthetic interests are stronger than ethical interests frequently attempt to set up a sphere of Art to which Morality is supposed to have no relation whatever. Such persons simply show that they have too narrow a view of what Morality is. What they really mean, or ought to mean, is that aesthetic activities or enjoyments have a high value quite apart from any further effects upon conduct in the narrower sense—that it may be morally right to paint and look at pictures which have no tendency to make the artist or the beholder go away and perform his social duties better. That artistic enjoyment has this high value and forms an important element in true human good, I have strongly contended. Our aesthetic objector may, however, mean more than this. He may mean that any amount of aesthetic enjoyment, and all kinds of it, are right, and right in all circumstances. Such a proposition is so extravagant that it could hardly be made by anybody who really contemplated the full consequences of his assertion; but, whether the proposition be true or false, it represents an ethical judgement—as much so as the proposition that the interests of Art must sometimes give way to the claims of social duty, and that there are in the world plays not devoid of aesthetic value which it was morally wrong to write, and which the State is right in not allowing to be acted. The question what kinds of Art it is good to produce, how much time it is right for such and such persons to spend in producing them or in contemplating them, within what limits the aesthetic indulgence should be restrained in the interests of wholesome moral feeling—these and such-like questions are moral questions. Morality deals with ultimate ends or elements in *the* end. No indulgence which does not form part of the true ultimate end can possibly be justified.

(3) The question may then be raised 'what is the relation between the moral and the aesthetic judgement?'

The moral judgement is a judgement of value; but is not, it may be asked, the aesthetic judgement also a judgement of value—at least for those who recognize its objective character and refuse to reduce it to the judgement 'this gives me a particular kind of pleasure'? When I pronounce that a thing is aesthetically 'good,' does not that imply that it is an end which ought to be pursued? Up to a certain point there can be little difficulty in answering the question. We may say that the moral judgement is in all cases the final one, but that the moral judgement must use the data supplied by the aesthetic judgement. The aesthetic judgement tells us 'this is beautiful.' The moral judgement goes on to say 'Beauty, or this particular kind of beauty, has an intrinsic worth, and consequently ought to be pursued.' We may even say that for a consciousness which recognizes the intrinsic value of Beauty, the judgement 'this picture is aesthetically good' practically implies and includes the judgement 'the contemplation of this picture has a certain intrinsic worth,' though other and purely moral judgements will be required to determine its relative worth as compared with other goods.

(4) But what if the moral judgement and the aesthetic judgement actually contradict one another? In ordinary cases of what may be superficially called collisions between the moral and the aesthetic judgements no real difficulty arises. When I say 'this play is aesthetically a good one, but on this particular evening it would be wrong for me to go and see it,' this is merely an ordinary case of the collision between goods. The judgement 'the contemplation of this play has a certain worth' is not rendered untrue by the judgement 'What I should do with my time and money if I did not go to see this play, has a greater worth, and it is my duty not only to seek the good but the greatest good. Hence it would be morally wrong to see the play.'

The real difficulty arises, not when we pronounce merely that what is aesthetically good is yet a good which for certain persons in certain circumstances ought to be surrendered in favour of a greater good, but when we pronounce it to be from a moral point of view actually bad. In some cases it may be possible to isolate and separate the good element from the bad. We may approve a novel as a work of Art, and yet condemn the moral tendency of incidental reflections or remarks by the author, or of certain disgusting episodes which (even if not actually irrelevant to the plot as it stands, as is often the case) may still be regarded as contributing nothing to the aesthetic effect of the piece which could not equally be secured by a somewhat different plot. Here we may say 'the work of Art as such is good; but a novel ought not merely to be artistic but to be decent. What I pronounce morally bad forms no part of what I pronounce aesthetically good.' But in other cases the immoral tendency may be too intimately allied with the artistic effect of the piece to be treated in this way. The particular kind of Art in question may be aesthetically good, and yet by its very nature appeal to passions which had better (from a moral

point of view) not be excited, at least in this way and in this intensity. This is particularly the case, I should judge, with certain kinds of Music in their effect upon highly musical natures. But even here is not the case after all only a case of the comparison of values? If we condemn the piece—that is to say, if we judge that it ought not to have been written, or that it ought not to be performed, or that particular persons should not hear it, or that it should not be listened to frequently—we judge that, though the worth which it possesses *qua* work of Art is a real worth, that worth is not so great as the worth of properly regulated passions, and that, if and in so far as the former kind of good cannot be enjoyed without the loss of the latter, that good is one which we should do without.

Of course I need hardly say that we may condemn the moral tendency of a book or a piece of music without necessarily saying that nobody should under any circumstances read the book or hear the music. The good may still—for particular persons and in particular circumstances—outweigh the evil. But that in some circumstances it is a moral duty to abstain from enjoyments which are aesthetically admirable cannot be doubted. In the great majority of cases—at least as regards Literature—the important thing is the relative proportion which the morally stimulating and the morally depressing in our reading bear to each other. Ruskin has remarked that the important thing is not so much what we don't read as what we do read. The properly nourished mind may for a sufficient purpose read, without injury and even with advantage, much which in itself has an immoral tendency, just as the properly nourished physical frame can swallow many germs of disease without deleterious effects. The principle must apply to a greater or less extent to other branches of Art.

(5) Another way of putting the matter is to say that, when we pronounce a particular experience aesthetically good but morally bad, we mean that it appeals to and satisfies a part of our nature, and a part which, when we look at it in abstraction from our nature as a whole, we pronounce good: but that, when compared with our ideal of human nature as a whole, this particular indulgence fails to be approved. To indulge in it—for certain persons, in certain circumstances, or beyond a certain point, or in some cases to indulge in it at all—would be to attach disproportionate value to this side of our nature as compared with others. The case of an aesthetic indulgence given up in deference to moral considerations differs from the case of a banquet condemned and abstained from as too costly or luxurious only in the fact that the good surrendered is, when taken in abstraction from our ideal of human life as a whole, a higher or more valuable good than the pleasures of good eating and drinking.

(6) From the point of view which has now been reached it may be possible to make a further step towards the solution of the difficulties presented by the problem of objectivity in the aesthetic judgement. The difficulty with which we are confronted is that (*a*) we are unwilling to admit that the judgement (say) of a certain Australian Minister of Education who solemnly pronounced that he had himself examined the works of William Shakespeare and could discover nothing in them but profanity

and obscenity, and that he should therefore discourage their use in schools, is objectively as good as that of the cultivated critics of all nations who regard Shakespeare as the greatest dramatic genius that the world has produced; and yet that (*b*) so many of our aesthetic judgements are so obviously connected with features of our particular human (sometimes even our local or racial) experience which we can perfectly well imagine to be different in another planet. Take for instance the undeniable tendency to regard the usual or normal or typical form of man or any other animal as the more beautiful, and to regard any considerable deviation from it as ugly—even when the individual thereby approximates to a type which in another animal we should think beautiful. We do not like a human face which approximates to the shape which in a horse or a mouse we should think beautiful enough. May it be possible to admit that the question what particular forms or colours give us aesthetic pleasure is largely dependent upon physiological constitution, use and wont, environment, accidental association; but that the objectivity of the aesthetic judgement lies not in the judgement which states the fact that we experience such and such a feeling but in the judgement which ascribes a value to this feeling—that in truth it is not the strictly aesthetic judgement that is objective, but the judgement of value which is pronounced on such and such an aesthetic experience? From this point of view we can admit that aesthetic pleasure is often given to different persons by different experiences; and yet that *in certain cases* there may be no more value in the one state of consciousness than in the other. The pleasure which red trees and a green sunset might give to the inhabitants of another planet might be just as 'true' or 'high' a pleasure as we derive from green trees and red sunset. In a differently constituted planet square arches might suggest feelings of awe and solemnity closely analogous to those which we derive from a Gothic cathedral, and both kinds of emotion might have their value. The negro's ideal of human beauty may include a broader nose and a different shape of head from a European's, but the resulting pleasure might to a perfectly disinterested intelligence appear to possess precisely the same value. But, though this might be so with those particular elements in the aesthetic consciousness which are in this way due to accidental circumstances, it need not be so with all. The Australian statesman mentioned above might have derived some pleasure from the poetry (say) of Longfellow or Mr. Kipling, and the disinterested intelligence would pronounce that that pleasure would have some value, but it would ascribe a higher value to the different pleasure which a more cultivated person would derive from Longfellow or Mr. Kipling, and a still higher value to the pleasure which Longfellow or Mr. Kipling have presumably derived from Shakespeare, but which the illiterate Minister of Education would be incapable of feeling at all. For the different estimate pronounced upon the poets in question would depend not upon mere accidents of physical organization or environment but upon general mental cultivation, upon qualities of intellect and character which to an impartial intelligence would appear to possess very different values,

Here it is not the same pleasure that is caused by different kinds of poetry to different men, but a quite different pleasure. It is true that the capacity for aesthetic appreciation may be dependent upon a delicacy of eye and ear which is purely physical. An unmusical poet may through the structure of his nervous system be incapacitated from deriving pleasure from music without being a man of lower intellect or character than the musician who derives exquisite pleasure from the same sounds, or rather from sounds caused by the same instruments, though they are sounds which the unmusical poet simply does not hear. When the unmusical poet pronounces the music not to be beautiful, his judgement may in a sense possess strictly objective truth: for not only is he right in saying that he gets no aesthetic pleasure from the music, but he is right in saying that no high objective value attaches to what he actually hears—to the sensations, ideas, and emotions which the music actually produces in him. Could the musician share that experience, he would agree with the poet as to its low intrinsic value. The poet is only in error if he denies the objective value of the emotion which the music sets up in souls that possess the musical capacity which has been denied him; or when he supposes that the elementary musical pleasure which he does himself derive from a simple hymn or song is of equal intrinsic worth with the pleasure which Beethoven or Bach gives to the musical. Even where a pleasure is given to some people by what appears to the more cultivated critic absolutely ugly, there may be a worth in the pleasure, though we may say that the uncultivated man is wrong, in a sense, in feeling it because his enjoyment of it implies incapacity for something much better worth enjoying. If we say more than this, if we say that he ought not to go on indulging in his low aesthetic pleasures (even if he cannot school himself into enjoying what the cultivated man enjoys), our judgement is clearly a moral judgement, and not an aesthetic one at all. To distinguish more in detail between the elements of aesthetic appreciation which are due to merely accidental circumstances and which might conceivably vary in differently constituted beings without either of them being in error, and those which are accounted for by incapacities in some beings for kinds of consciousness the value of which could not be denied by any intelligence without error, would involve a treatise on Aesthetic Philosophy which I have no intention of attempting. I merely throw out the suggestion that the really objective element in the aesthetic judgement is the judgement of value which it implies. The judgement of value implied in aesthetic judgement differs from ordinary judgements of value merely in being a judgement as to the value of a particular class or aspect of human experience which requires to be looked at in relation to a whole complex of other judgements of value before it can form a ground for making the avowedly and professedly moral judgement 'this kind of experience ought to be indulged in by *A* or *B* or promoted by *A* or *B* in *C* or *D* at such and such a time and in such and such circumstances.'

(7) The result of this analysis—or mere suggestion of a possible analysis—is not to deny the objectivity of many of our aesthetic judgements, but

to bring the objective element in them into closer connexion with our ordinary judgements of value—the judgements which we usually call distinctively moral judgements. The judgement 'this is beautiful' claims objective validity in the sense that it asserts (*a*) that in the ideally constituted consciousness, it will produce such and such an aesthetic experience, and (*β*) that this aesthetic experience possesses such and such a value. There may be cases in which a man might derive an equally valuable aesthetic experience from other external objects, just as one man likes one kind of food and another another without there being any difference of intrinsic value between the two kinds of pleasure: but that is not so always. In other cases the consciousness that thought such and such things beautiful would be pronounced by an omniscient mind to be inferior to the consciousness to which they appeared ugly. At the same time, though aesthetic judgements are (or include) judgements of value, they are value-judgements of a very distinctive and special kind. There will always be this much difference between them and what we usually call moral judgements, (*a*) that to judge well of the value of various kinds of aesthetic experience requires a different kind of mental capacity from that which is required to judge well of other values, and (*b*) that the judgement 'this has aesthetic value' cannot pass into a moral judgement, on which any one can be called upon to act, until the value of the aesthetic experience has been compared with the value of other kinds of experience—the value for instance of Love in ourselves and of the pleasure produced by a socially useful action in others, and it is this estimate of *comparative* values which we usually call in a distinctive sense the moral judgement. Many may have a good aesthetic judgement, i. e. are capable of the higher aesthetic experiences and judge rightly of their value, who may have a bad moral judgement, i. e. be incapable of appreciating other kinds of experience at their true value when compared with the higher aesthetic experiences; others may have a good moral judgement in general, i. e. rightly estimate (say) the superior value of Love and rightly balance the value of other people's pleasure against their own, but may make mistakes in particular cases from want of a developed aesthetic consciousness, i. e. because they do not see that Shakespeare is beautiful or underestimate the true value of the sense of beauty in general.

CHAPTER VII

IDEAL UTILITARIANISM

I

In previous chapters I have sought to show that the way to find out whether an action is right or wrong, when we are forced to consider such a question for ourselves without reference to some established rule[1], is to consider whether it will tend to produce for society in general a Well-being or εὐδαιμονία or good which includes many elements possessing different values, which values are intuitively discerned and compared with one another by the moral or practical Reason. The right action is always that which (so far as the agent has the means of knowing) will produce the greatest amount of good upon the whole. This position implies that all goods or elements of the good are in some sense and for some purposes commensurable. Some of the objections which may be taken to this position I shall consider hereafter. In the present chapter I shall aim at illustrating how the moral judgements implied by the special virtues, and in particular by those which are *prima facie* most unutilitarian, are explainable upon the supposition that all moral judgements are ultimately judgements as to the value of ends. This view of Ethics, which combines the utilitarian principle that Ethics must be teleological with a non-hedonistic view of the ethical end, I propose to call Ideal Utilitarianism. According to this view actions are right or wrong according as they tend to produce for all mankind an ideal end or good, which includes, but is not limited to, pleasure.

A paramount position among our moral judgements is (as we have seen) occupied by the three axioms of Prudence, Benevo-

[1] When we ought to enter upon such a consideration is a question which I have discussed in Book II, chap. v.

lence, and Equity. It is self-evident to me that I ought (where it does not collide with the greater good of another) to promote my own greatest good, that I ought to prefer a greater good on the whole to a lesser, and that I ought to regard the good of one man as of equal intrinsic value with the like good of any one else.

This last assumption will be further defended and explained in the Chapter on Justice. Meanwhile, it may be assumed that the ultimate meaning of absolute Justice is to be sought in this equal distribution of good.

Such is the meaning, I take it, of ultimate social Justice. Justice in this absolute sense prescribes the principle, whatever it be, upon which the good is to be distributed, while Benevolence is taken to mean the promotion of maximum social good without reference to the question of its distribution. In this sense even the hedonistic Utilitarian must admit the necessity of recognizing that Virtue cannot be altogether resolved into Benevolence, unless the meaning of Benevolence is narrowed down to a Benevolence which is consistent with Justice. But it must be admitted that there are many senses of the word Justice, as popularly used, which do not seem *prima facie* to have any reference to the question of the distribution of Well-being or ultimate good. When we say that it is unjust to punish a man without hearing his defence, or to compel a man to give evidence against himself, or to punish a man twice for the same offence, or to make an *ex post facto* law, or to decide a civil action in favour of the poorer or the more deserving litigant who has nevertheless the worse case—in all such cases there seems no obvious or immediate reference to any principle for the ultimate distribution either of ultimate Well-being or of its material conditions. In Aristotelian language 'regulative' Justice[1]—the Justice of the law-courts—seems to be a different virtue from 'distributive' Justice. But in all these heterogeneous uses of the term Justice there seems

[1] The same may be said of his Commercial Justice, or Justice of Exchange. It assumes the justice of the principle of private property and free barter in exchange, which a Socialist might regard as intrinsically unjust on account of the advantage which it gives to the possessor of unearned capital.

to be this much in common; they all prescribe impartiality in the treatment of individuals; they forbid inequality, or rather arbitrary inequality—inequality not justified by the requirements of social Well-being, or some other general and rational principle—in the treatment of individuals. They all involve the application of some general rule or principle without respect of persons to particular cases. The question of the justice of this rule is not, in common discourse, brought into question. We call a judge unjust who refuses to apply the law impartially, though we ourselves disapprove of the law and regard it as essentially unjust. Thus we may say that the word, as used in ordinary parlance, always denotes impartiality in distribution upon some condition—assuming some established principle or rule of the actual social order, which must itself no doubt rest upon some principle of absolute Justice if it is to be capable of ultimate justification, but the justice of which is for the moment assumed. Thus we say that it is unjust to punish one man more severely than another for the same offence and under precisely similar circumstances, because here no consideration of social expediency (that is to say, at bottom no conflicting claims of other men) can interfere with the general principle that one man should be treated in exactly the same way as another under exactly the same circumstances. The principles of absolute Justice cannot require such unequal treatment: if they did, that would constitute such a difference of circumstance as might justify the unequal treatment. But we do not regard it as unjust for the judge to decide a case in a way which will enrich an already rich man and beggar a poor man, because we assume the justice of the laws of property, and regard it as the duty of the judge simply to administer that law impartially; or for a naval officer to receive more prize-money than a common sailor, because on other grounds we assume that social Well-being demands the adoption of an unequal scale of remuneration for officers and men, while we should regard it as unjust to give more to one man than to another of the same rank. It is unnecessary to multiply illustrations: in all cases the popular usages of the term Justice, in so far as they are capable of defence, may be held to imply the due regard of the claim of individuals—not

their intrinsic merit or ultimate claims to Well-being, but their claim according to some established or recognized law or principle of distribution. Varied as are the uses of the term Justice in common language, the underlying idea of all of them seems to be that our accepted principles of social conduct, whatever they may be, should be applied impartially as between different individuals or classes. Sometimes of course when an act or a custom or an institution is pronounced unjust, it is meant that the established principle itself is one which cannot be defended upon any ground of social expediency, that it violates the fundamental principle that the ultimate value of one man's good is equal to that of the like good of another. But this question of absolute Justice raises so many difficult and intricate questions that further explanations must be reserved for a separate chapter.

Subject to due regulation by the rule of Justice or Equity [1], it might seem to follow from the principles which we have hitherto adopted that all virtues could be explained as ultimately resolvable into rational Benevolence or Love. But even the Hedonist must recognize that special names are in practice given to various special kinds of conduct, which are supposed to be conducive in definite and distinguishable ways to human good; such kinds of conduct, or rather the dispositions to perform them, are called particular virtues. On the view which judges of the ultimate value of goods by other than a hedonistic standard we are able to establish a sharper and clearer distinction between the different duties or the dispositions which lead to their performance, since we can recognize not merely a distinction between different kinds of conduct all ultimately conducive to a single good, but also a real and important distinction between the kinds of good which they tend to promote. Thus even from the hedonistic point of view it is clearly convenient to have a distinctive name for the disposition to observe the rule of truth-speaking, though

[1] Which includes Prudence, or the recognition of the due claims of self. That due recognition of the claims of self is a duty is well put by Höffding (*Ethik*, p. 119): 'It follows from the principle of Welfare [or Utility] that the individual is *only* one among many, but it follows also therefrom that the individual really *is* one among many.'

to the Utilitarian truth-speaking is simply one of the particular rules which the supreme and all-inclusive duty of promoting human pleasure imposes upon mankind. From the point of view of ideal Utilitarianism we may no doubt recognize that devotion to true human good will include all other virtues, Veracity among the number: but we shall be disposed to insist more strongly upon this and other special or particular virtues, because to us truthfulness of character, in ourselves and others, is a part of the end or ideal life which the virtuous man will seek to promote, and not merely a means to a good other than itself. We shall be less disposed to acquiesce in the disposition to reduce all the virtues to Benevolence, since in practice ethical teaching of this kind is pretty sure to obscure or slur over the fact that the end which the benevolent man is to promote must include many other kinds of good besides pleasure, many dispositions, emotions, activities, states of consciousness which are valued for their own sakes and not merely as a means to some further good.

I do not intend in the present work to attempt any exhaustive enumeration or description of the particular kinds of conduct, the particular duties or virtues, which are included in the disposition to promote true human good, or of the various ends or elements in that good with which these various duties or virtues are specially concerned. I shall not attempt to show elaborately in what ways virtues such as Honesty, Industry, Family Affection, Kindliness, Compassion, Loyalty (to the State or other social institutions), Orderliness, Courage (physical and moral) are conducive to the general good. That they are so is common ground between the hedonistic and the ideal Utilitarian, though no doubt it will be possible to find in connexion with all of them casuistical questions which might have to be differently answered by those who take and by those who refuse to take a hedonistic view of human good. Descriptions or classifications of duties or virtues are apt to be tedious and useless, unless the details of duty are discussed with much greater fullness than is compatible with the scope of the present work. I propose, therefore, to confine myself in this chapter to some remarks upon those duties or virtues which seem at first sight most difficult to reconcile with the view that all virtue consists ultimately in the promotion

of true social good, and which really are (as it appears to me) incapable of being reconciled with that doctrine, so long as social good is understood in a purely hedonistic sense.

II

In the first place, I must observe that even those virtues which are most obviously altruistic in their tendency are, according to our view, also ends in themselves—having a value independent of, and in some cases much greater than, the mere pleasure which they cause in others. Hence it becomes rational to encourage the cultivation and exercise of these virtues even in ways which cannot always be shown to produce a net gain in pleasure on the whole. I have already illustrated this in the case of Humanity to men and animals. The high value which we assign to all natural kindliness of feeling and to parental affection in particular is, I believe, one of the main grounds for our condemnation of infanticide. The same consideration forbids the extinction of life in the case of the old or the sick or the insane, and generally speaking, persons whose existence is a burden to the community, even should they be willing to consent to the sacrifice. If it be assumed that their lives are a burden even to themselves, then of course the question is complicated with another, the lawfulness of suicide, to which we shall return later on.

It is no doubt quite compatible with this high estimate of the social affections to urge that in certain directions Christian sentiment has been carried to extremes. But here it is important to bear in mind a principle on which we shall have frequently to insist—that we must take into consideration the actual psychological constitution of human nature, and the impossibility of modifying it exactly in the way and to the extent which pleases us. It might be difficult without this principle to justify our absolute condemnation of the extinction of extremely misshapen infants. It would be difficult, that is, to maintain *a priori* that it would not be a gain to society to eliminate the infants most grossly and obviously unfitted for life, were it not for the fact of the horror which the idea actually excites in humane persons. The moral reformer who should feel inclined

to suggest some modification of the existing custom will, however, reflect on the extreme value of the feelings which such a suggestion would shock, the extreme difficulty of drawing the line between the permitted and the unpermitted elimination, and the impossibility of securing that interference with spontaneous emotions shall stop just where he wants it to stop. He will remember the ease with which the kindly inhibition of an unhappy life might degenerate (in individual parents and in society at large) into a mere selfish repudiation of trouble, privation or anxiety, and the encouragement which any extension of the practice would give to materialistic and hedonistic views of life. We condemn infanticide, because we consider the feelings which the prohibition cultivates to be of more intrinsic worth than the good which it secures. Given the actual psychological constitution of human nature, we may even judge it best that such questions should not be raised at all: but, if they are raised, there is no principle upon which they can be decided but this of the comparative worth of the sentiments and type of character encouraged by that prohibition and of the social advantages which might accrue from its relaxation. While I have no doubt that on the whole the established rule is right, it is possible that in certain extreme cases the Christian sentiment has been pushed too far, and that in the case of actual monsters or beings entirely destitute of human intelligence, in which it is possible to draw a fairly definite line, and in which the life that is preserved is as valueless from a moral as it is from a hedonistic point of view, an exception might be made[1].

[1] It appears that this was the recognized doctrine both for Church and State in Christian countries in the seventeenth century: see constant allusions to it in connexion with the difficulty of defining the term 'man' in the works of Leibniz. In 'Some Remarks on Punishment' in the *International Journal of Ethics* (vol. iv, 1893–4, p. 269 *sq.*), Mr. Bradley assumes the whole of the modern aversion to infanticide to be due to what he would regard as a pure superstition about the taking of human life. That the feeling of the sanctity of life, assumed to be prescribed by direct divine revelation, has historically exercised some influence in this direction can hardly be denied; but that so deeply-seated and widely-spread an ethical change should be due entirely to 'superstition' or to *merely* theological ideas (reasonable or unreasonable) is a view which will probably commend itself only to anti-Christian fanaticism. The Buddhistic feeling against the taking

Another possible case in which a valuable sentiment has been indulged to an exaggerated extent may perhaps be found in the practice of preserving, at immense risk to warders and doctors, the lives of homicidal maniacs.

III

I pass on to consider some other of the less obviously utilitarian virtues and duties. Through all of them there seems to run the general principle that a higher value should be attributed to the exercise and cultivation of the higher—that is to say, of the intellectual, æsthetic, and emotional—faculties than to the indulgence of the merely animal and sensual part of our nature. We regard knowledge, culture, enjoyment of beauty, intellectual activity of all kinds, and the emotions connected with these things, as having a higher value than the pleasures arising from the gratification of the mere animal propensities to eating and drinking or physical exercise or the like[1]. What

of life, however little in its exaggeration capable of rational defence, is at all events sufficient to show that the sentiment with which we have to deal is not the mere influence of a supposed divine command inherited by Christianity from Judaism. Moreover, it is worthy of note that the practice advocated by Mr. Bradley was condemned by the best pagans. Even Plato, to whom Mr. Bradley appeals, did not approve of the deliberate bringing into existence of children expressly designed for the slaughter-house; he sanctioned infanticide only in case of children born of parents who had passed the prescribed age; while Aristotle condemned infanticide for the mere purpose of reducing population, and allowed it only in the case of misshapen infants. For a sanction to 'social surgery' of the wholesale type advocated by Mr. Bradley we must descend below the level of the 'higher Paganism.'

[1] We may legitimately attribute a higher value to athletic enjoyment than to mere gratification of the senses because (*a*) athletic exercises (especially in the form of games) in moderation are as conducive to the due activity of the intellect as in excess (an excess very soon reached) they are detrimental to it, (*b*) because (especially in men of small moral or intellectual capacities) they supply a useful antidote to still more animal propensities, (*c*) because they do cultivate some moral and intellectual qualities. I might say more on this side of the matter if it were not for the enormous exaggeration of the moral value of athletics which is popular at the present moment, and which is threatening the higher life of the nation no less than the prestige of our commerce and the efficiency of our army. The fallacy of the arguments commonly used by those schoolmasters who encourage the

is the relative value of these things as compared with activities of a directly social character, is a question on which we may have to say something hereafter. It is not necessary to deny that the encouragement even of such intellectual pursuits as are of the least direct and obvious social utility does lead to an increase of pleasure on the whole, but our feeling about them is not based upon any such doubtful calculations: and assuredly there are many cases where an individual would find it difficult to justify the devotion of his whole time to pursuits which bring pleasure only to himself, and perhaps a very small circle of other people, when it might be bestowed upon work which would undoubtedly bring pleasure or a saving of pain to large numbers, if he thought that all pleasure was of equal worth, that nothing was of any value but pleasure, and that conduct was right only in so far as it tends to increase of pleasure.

This general principle of the superiority of certain parts of our nature to others—the more purely human to the more animal—is the root of two sets of virtues:—

1. Of those virtues (though moderns are not much in the habit of thinking of them as virtues at all) which consist in the exercise of the higher intellectual and æsthetic faculties:

2. Of the virtues which consist in the due control or subordination of the lower or more animal impulses.

Of the first we need not speak more at length, except in one connexion. This seems to be the place to say a word about the source of our respect for Truth. Granted the great social utility of being able to take a man's word (say in commercial transactions), it is obvious, to my mind, that upon hedonistic assumptions the exceptions would be much more numerous than would commend themselves at least to a well-brought-up Englishman. There would be no reason why we should resist that tendency to say (in matters of no importance),

exaggerations of Athleticism seems to lie chiefly in assuming (1) that the qualities undoubtedly cultivated by games cannot be cultivated in any other way, (2) that the resource, initiative, self-control, habit of co-operation, prompt action, &c., cultivated in one particular way will transfer themselves to other spheres. Experience does not seem to favour either assumption. A football player who excels in 'combination' is quite as likely as other men to play for his own hand in real life.

at any expense to Truth, what would be agreeable to the hearer which is, indeed, almost sanctioned by the current morality of some civilized nations. It is of course possible to enumerate many inconveniences—particularly what we may call moral inconveniences, loss of any opportunities of learning our defects and the like—which result from such a toleration of minor lying. But, entirely apart from all such considerations, I believe that we do on reflection recognize something intrinsically fitting in the rule which prescribes that a rational being, endowed with faculties which enable him to pursue, to communicate, and to love the truth, should use those faculties in that way rather than for the purpose of making things appear otherwise than as they are. So much appears to me to be the clear result of introspection, and to be implied in the strongest moral convictions of other men. But, it is equally easy to show that to erect the principle of Veracity into a hard and fast rule admitting of no exceptions is out of harmony with the belief and the practice of the most conscientious persons. Where some conventional use of language is sufficiently recognized, formal untruths may no doubt be removed from the category of lies proper by the principle that words must be taken to mean what they are commonly understood to mean. In this way we may defend the formal 'not at home,' the usual forms of social and epistolary salutation, the hyperboles of courtly compliment, though in proportion as these latter pass beyond the minimum of fixed convention their justification becomes more precarious. But this principle is inapplicable to the actual deception practised by detectives, or by private persons towards a brigand inquiring the whereabouts of his victim, or to the denial of bad news to sick persons, or to lies told for the preservation of important secrets, or to the employment of ancient formulae (a political oath, a declaration imposed by some ancient Statute, or a confession of faith[1]), which nobody takes quite literally, but with respect to which the limits of permissible latitude are not definitely fixed by universally under-

[1] I have discussed this particular application of the principle in an article in the *International Journal of Ethics*, 'Prof. Sidgwick on Religious Conformity,' vol. III (Jan. 1897).

stood and accepted custom. Of course, in proportion as these exceptions to the rule of truth-speaking are generally recognized, part of the moral objection to them disappears. Though they in some cases deceive for the moment the particular person to whom they are addressed, they do not to any important extent tend to weaken respect for truth, the habit of telling the truth, and the general confidence in other people's statements.

It is no doubt much to be desired that a general understanding should be arrived at about such matters. But as a matter of fact no such general understanding does exist, and the absence of such an understanding forms an insuperable objection to finding even in the case of Veracity—the stronghold of popular Intuitionism—the case of an intuitively discerned rule of conduct, universally binding without any consideration of consequences. From our point of view we have no difficulty in reconciling the 'intuitive' basis of the virtue with the occurrence of exceptions based upon consideration of consequences. Truth-speaking is a good, and so (still more) is that inward love of truth of which truth-speaking is the expression and the guarantee. It *is* almost invariably right to speak the truth, because it is morally good both for ourselves to speak it and for others to hear it, even when it is unpleasant to both parties. But there are other goods besides truth-speaking and truth-loving: and sometimes Truth must be sacrificed to the more imperative claims of Humanity or of Justice. In each case we must decide which is of the greatest worth—the speaking of truth and the habit of speaking it which my lie would tend to discourage, or the life which my lie will save, the injustice that it will prevent, the practical good which it will enable me to do, the greater truth which it will enable me to diffuse. There are even cases in which a lie has to be told in the interests of Truth itself. An untrue statement must be made to one man in order to keep a secret which one has promised to respect; a statement literally untrue must be made that a higher truth may be taught or real liberty of thought and speech advanced[1].

[1] This is admirably put by Höffding (*Ethik*, p. 178): 'The duty of speaking the truth amounts to this, the duty of promoting the supremacy of the truth

It will be observed that I have drawn no hard and fast distinction between the duty of Veracity and the duty towards Truth in a wider and more speculative sense. And it seems to me of great practical importance to insist that the social duty of Veracity and the duty of scientific enquiry ultimately spring from the same root, though in the case of Veracity the duty is more directly and immediately dependent upon our social relations. We ought not to lie one to another (as was recognized by St. Paul), because we are 'members one of another,' because we do not like to hear lies told to ourselves, and ought not to like them even when they are pleasant. Deception implies want of respect for the personality of others. But, after all, the distinction is only one of degree, for there is some social reference even in the duty of seeking speculative truth. It is under ordinary circumstances best for ourselves and for others that we should seek and make known the truth in matters of Religion and of Science as well as about the facts of common life. It is important to insist upon the close connexion between a very practical duty and one which is intimately associated with the highest intellectual aspirations for two reasons. It emphasizes the fact that the social duty is not confined to the mere abstinence from false statements (though of course the negative rule is capable of more exact definition and admits of fewer legitimate exceptions than the

("die Wahrheit zur Herrschaft zu bringen"): the end may, however, often be interfered with by speaking the truth.' So Sir Leslie Stephen: 'The rule, "Lie not," is the external rule, and corresponds approximately to the internal rule, "Be trustworthy." . . . Truthfulness is the rule because in the vast majority of cases we trust a man in so far as he speaks the truth: in the exceptional cases the mutual confidence would be violated when the truth, not when the lie, is spoken' (*A Study of Ethics*, p. 208). So the insistence upon a strict and literal interpretation of political or religious formulae is often opposed to the interests of Truth. The man too scrupulous to join a party, some part of whose programme does not express his real mind, or to subscribe a creed details of which are obsolete, often does less than he might do to propagate the truth. Such protests often have their value, but it is perhaps the tendency of conscientious persons to over-estimate this negative devotion to Truth. In the case of the actual 'pious fraud' or γενναῖον ψεῦδος it is most commonly the minor, not the major premiss of the moral syllogism which is questionable. Such frauds would be justifiable if (when *all* their consequences are considered) they were socially beneficial.

positive), and it further illustrates how the admission of exceptions is compatible with the fullest recognition of an 'intuitive' basis for the duty. It may be recognized as a general principle that it is a duty to seek for and to reveal the truth in spite of the fact that its discovery often seems to weaken or to shatter beliefs, institutions, habits, traditions of high social utility. Even in the most modern times I believe that this duty is inadequately recognized, at least by those who are in the habit of attaching most value to what are commonly called moral considerations in the narrower sense of the word. There is probably, in this country at least, too much, not too little, unwillingness to communicate to the ignorant and the young the results of Science or of scientific Theology, for fear they should weaken the reverence and the Morality which have in the past been associated with beliefs no longer tenable. And yet those who put the duty highest acknowledge that it has at times to give way to others more imperative still. No one but a fanatic thinks it a duty to proclaim the truth on every subject, at all times and under all circumstances—in omnibuses and railway trains, before old and young, simple and learned, on suitable occasions and unsuitable—with equal openness and equal insistence. Some respect we all recognize it as right to show to the known convictions, the sympathies, the limitations, the prejudices of our hearers; to the social convenience of the principle that there is a time and place for all things; to a host of conventions, traditions, and understandings. The principle that all moral judgements are judgements of value, while all value is comparative, supplies us with an unfailing means of reconciling the highest reverence for Truth with the limitations which all sensible and right-feeling persons recognize to the duty of actively proclaiming it; although it does not (any more than any other ethical principle) supply us with an infallible mode of discerning what is right in difficult cases of 'conflicting duties[1].'

[1] Of course in the strictest sense there can be no 'conflict of duties.' It is no doubt true that the duty only begins when the conflict of traditional rules or of real moral principles has been decided. If one supposed 'duty' is overruled by another, the former is not really a duty. But the expression is a natural and convenient one.

IV

The due subordination of the appetites, their control in such a way as is most favourable to the activity of the higher part of our nature, constitutes the virtue of Temperance in that wider sense indicated by the Greek *σωφροσύνη*, translated by the Schoolmen *temperantia*, but for which modern languages have no single comprehensive name. In some ways the circumstance is regrettable, as it tends to oblivion of the fact that the same consideration which dictates the control of the sexual impulse dictates also moderation not only in drinking but in eating and (it may be added) in respect of all the lower and more animal pleasures. On the other hand it has the advantage of emphasizing the fact that in the degree and kind of control which the highest Morality imposes upon the sexual appetite we have advanced beyond the mere moderation which commended itself to the average Greek mind in the time of Aristotle.

It is in dealing with the virtue of Purity as it has been understood by the Christian consciousness, and the higher religious consciousness even outside the limits of Christendom, that hedonistic-utilitarian explanations of Morality break down most hopelessly. It is in reference to this virtue that the developed moral consciousness does seem most nearly to assume the form which Intuitionism gives to all ethical precepts—that of a prohibition to do certain acts, a prohibition which gives no further account of itself, and which positively forbids any calculation of consequences or admission of exceptions. While strongly insisting that the moral consciousness in its highest development does condemn all sexual indulgence outside monogamous marriage, I should contend that this prohibition admits of being stated in the form of a judgement as to the ultimate value of an end. It is a certain state of feeling which is pronounced to be of intrinsic value—a state of feeling which the clearest moral insight and the highest spiritual experience of the race have decided to be incompatible with sexual indulgence outside a relatively permanent monogamous union. If the moral consciousness here *seems* to forbid all calculation

of consequences, or comparison of values, it is because from the nature of the case it is practically impossible that considerations of social well-being should ever prescribe a departure from the rule. I will not attempt to discuss the wholly abnormal circumstances in which it might be possible to conceive that some great advantage, whether for country or for humanity, might be obtained by submission to a single act of impurity at the behest of a tyrant or the like. Without positively denying that such exceptions might conceivably be found, I will only point out that even the absolute refusal to relax the rule in however extraordinary a case would be quite compatible with the doctrine that the morality of acts depends upon their consequences, for it may be held that such a refusal (when we take into account its tendency to secure respect for the principle in the eyes of others) is so great a good as to be worth any sacrifice which has to be paid for it in any particular combination of circumstances. The man or the woman who brought suffering on family or country by heroism of this kind would not be setting up an arbitrary categorical imperative against the true interests of the human race, but simply interpreting the true interests of the race by a non-hedonistic standard of value.

I have said that the law of Purity is the moral precept which admits of the most exact definition and which gives rise to the smallest possibility of exceptions of a kind which will appeal to men of highly developed moral nature in modern Christendom. But it is worth pointing out that there is a side on which the law is less capable of exact and universally accepted definition, and on which it involves questions obviously incapable of settlement without reference to social consequences. There is a consensus, within the limits indicated above, that sexual indulgence must be limited to monogamous marriage. But as to the exact conditions which constitute a lawful monogamous marriage the consensus is certainly much less complete—in particular upon two points, upon the question of prohibited degrees and the question of divorce. With regard to prohibited degrees, nothing much need be said, since it is generally admitted by those who do not feel that society is bound for all time by the decision of the early Church, or of Roman Emperors and their

ecclesiastical advisers, that the limits must be determined by considerations of social convenience in the ordinary sense of the term. The only way in which the adoption of a non-hedonistic standard will be likely to modify our attitude towards the question will be in reinforcing the demand that the higher moral aspect of marriage shall be allowed due weight as well as the question of mere materialistic convenience. We shall ask not merely whether the prohibition of marriage with a deceased wife's sister is most conducive to the convenience and enjoyment of widowers and their families, but whether the principle that marriage-relationship shall be regarded as equivalent to blood-relationship tends to heighten the general ideal of the marriage bond. I do not contend that this consideration will practically be likely to modify the decision to which we should have come on other grounds. On the question of divorce, however, this aspect of the matter becomes of paramount importance.

Those who take the highest view of the marriage-tie—for practical purposes, we may as well say, those who adopt the Christian view of marriage—are agreed in insisting that it is part of its ideal that such unions shall be permanent. The *ideal* of marriage is a spiritual union of a kind which absolutely forbids any voluntary termination of it, even independently of the interests of children, which are also no doubt best secured by the greatest attainable permanence. The question whether under particular circumstances, when this ideal has not been reached, the dissolution of the marriage with liberty to marry again is or is not the less of two evils involves precisely the same kind of comparison of goods—in this case of very heterogeneous goods—which we have seen to be necessary in every ethical judgement. Here, as usual, the comparison is not wholly a balancing of higher good against lower: there are moral advantages and moral disadvantages on both sides. On the one hand there is the moral advantage of insisting upon the idea of permanence, in forcing people to enter upon marriage with the deliberate intention of doing all that in them lies to make it a permanent and a spiritual union and not a mere partnership based upon interest and terminable at pleasure: on the other hand there are the obvious moral objections to the prohibition of

re-marriage where cohabitation has become impossible. The question does not seem to be one which admits of any universal solution without regard to circumstances of time and place: and it is to be observed that the moral problem is here not precisely the same as the political problem. It is one question whether people aiming at the highest ideal of life ought to marry again in certain circumstances: it is another question whether, if people wish to do so, the State should prevent them. The question is, therefore, one to which the State may quite intelligibly give one answer, and the Church, which is a voluntary society for the promotion of the highest life, a somewhat different one. On the other hand any appearance of discord between the morality of the Church and the morality of the State is itself a grave source of moral perplexity and relaxation: on such matters the State, at least in Protestant countries and with the majority of their inhabitants, is a more powerful moral educator than the Church. I will leave the subject with the remark that on this question there is likely to be a grave difference between the solutions offered by hedonistic and by non-hedonistic Utilitarianism. The logical Hedonist will attach much greater importance than the ethical Idealist to the hardship involved in the prohibition of re-marriage to an offending party [1], and much less to the social importance of inculcating, even at the cost of real hardship to individuals, a high and spiritual ideal of marriage.

Another question connected with the definition of Purity is raised by the change which is actually passing over the morality of Europe with regard to the relation of the sexual instinct to the procreation of children. The subject deserves a passing mention because we have here a great unsettled problem of Ethics in which differences of ethical theory may have a vital bearing upon practical questions of immense moment: and it is good even from the most purely theoretical point of view to bring our ethical theories into contact with real practical

[1] I regard the prohibition of marriage even by the Church to the innocent party in the case of adultery as clearly incapable of rational justification (whatever may be thought about the question of the guilty party): the Eastern Church has always observed this distinction.

problems. In Christian countries there has been a tendency until recently to condemn all restriction, even of the most purely negative kind, to the number of births, and to represent it as a moral duty for married persons to bring into the world the largest number of children that is physically possible. The time is past when such a precept would have been defended on the ground that a maximum increase of population is in itself, in all circumstances, a desirable end; though our solution of the problem may be seriously affected by our view of the degree of urgency which the population question has reached. Every one but a Pessimist will admit that the population of a country ought to be kept up or even (so far as this can be done without lowering the quality of its life) to increase; and that therefore it is a moral duty on the part of married persons to be willing to undertake the responsibilities of parentage: that is part of the ideal of marriage. It does not follow that it is desirable that population should increase with a maximum rapidity: if that were so celibacy would be immoral. But even apart from the population question, there are many considerations which may reasonably be urged against the assumption that large families are always a good thing: and these considerations are not all of a hedonistic or materialistic character. There is the wife's health, the interference with other than purely domestic employments, the loss of educational advantages which the increase of family may entail upon every member of it. Of course if it is considered desirable that the increase of families should sometimes be restrained by rational considerations, the morality of such restraint may depend much upon the method adopted. Methods which involve 'interference with nature' are open to objections which cannot be urged against the method which involves nothing but self-restraint during certain periods. The question is one which cannot be discussed in detail here, though it is one which urgently demands free and candid examination. My object here, as throughout this chapter, is not so much to discuss and to settle detailed questions of Casuistry as to point out the method by which they ought to be solved. In this, as in other cases, if we are not to prove unfaithful to the method we have adopted, we must not fall back upon the short

and easy method of saying that we have an intuition that all such methods are wrong. We must fairly estimate on the one hand the evils of all sorts, moral, intellectual, hedonistic, which are imposed by the over-multiplication of families on the individuals primarily concerned and on the community, on the other the goods which may be secured by the absence of birth-restriction, and compare them with the good and evil involved in the restriction of births—the value or unvalue which we attribute to the act in itself and to its subsequent effects upon health, upon character, and upon the whole ideal of life which it expresses and tends to foster. We must pronounce on the side on which we judge the balance of 'good' to lie.

The other branch of the Greek self-control (*σωφροσύνη*) is the one to which the term Temperance has generally been confined by modern usage. There is a disposition to narrow it still further to the duty of moderation in drinking, which has nearly succeeded in eliminating from modern Morality the idea that there is anything disgraceful in what medieval Ethics styled 'gulosity'—over-eating or excessive addiction to the 'pleasures of the table' at whatever expense of money or (what is the same thing) of human labour. When taken in the narrower sense of moderation in drinking, there is undoubtedly no duty that can be more easily or convincingly inculcated on the most purely hedonistic grounds, so long as it is understood to forbid merely habitual excess in the use of alcohol or similar stimulants. And of course occasional excess may be condemned on account of the great probability that it will lead to more frequent acts of the same kind. Nevertheless, the question of the immorality of occasional drunkenness is one upon which there will be, as it seems to me, a real difference between the verdict of hedonistic and of ideal Utilitarianism. The hygienic ill-effects of getting drunk once a month are probably not so bad (for many men) as the taking of two glasses of port every day after dinner. For some men the former are in all probability a negligible quantity, while the two glasses of port would mean certain gout or chronic dyspepsia. On hedonistic principles an occasional act of drunkenness would only be condemned because it might lead, in the man himself and others, to habits of excess which would

not be innocent, and under many circumstances there is little risk [1] that such an act will lead to habitual excess. And yet the healthy moral consciousness does condemn as intrinsically degrading even the most occasional act of deliberate drunkenness. On the method of ideal Utilitarianism such a condemnation will be justified without any elaborate attempt to prove the existence of remoter social ill consequences. We see the act to be intrinsically disgusting, and there is an end of the matter [2].

It will be observed that in some of the obligations usually included under the name of Purity and in the duty of Temperance we have clear instances of self-regarding duties. It is true no doubt that no kind of wrong-doing is without social ill effects, but in some cases the social ill effect may be simply the encouragement of the like violations of self-regarding duty in others. There would be no objection to such encouragement unless the act were wrong in the individual case. The duty of Self-culture —of developing one's intellectual and aesthetic capacities in so far as is compatible with the fulfilment of social obligations— is another self-regarding duty. On the method of hedonistic Utilitarianism a man on a desert island would have no duty except to get as much pleasure as possible, and perhaps to preserve his capacity for future service in the event of his rejoining society. The latter contingency being, in the case supposed, highly problematical, it might be urged that an Alexander Selkirk would best observe the precepts of the Utilitarian creed by seeking to increase his pleasure to a maximum point, even though the effect of such indulgence would be to incapacitate himself for future service, and to hasten his end. 'A short life and a merry one' would be the aim of any

[1] I do not say none. The loss of self-respect which arises from a first act of drunkenness may involve grave consequences, but this is so just because the man does not really believe that drunkenness is only wrong so far as it diminishes pleasure.

[2] Of course by drunkenness I mean the voluntary extinction of consciousness and self-control for no purpose but momentary pleasure or satisfaction of impulse. If alcoholic poisoning were a suitable anaesthetic for medical purposes, its use might undoubtedly be as justifiable as that of chloroform. In normal circumstances it is obvious that there can be no remoter good effects to outweigh the immediate evil.

such consistent Utilitarian who thought that a longer life of higher pursuits would not so effectually extinguish the misery of solitude as 'the short vehemence' of some carnal pleasure. On our theory it would be the duty, even of the man accidentally separated from society and little likely to rejoin it, to cultivate the higher part of his nature and with that view to moderate his indulgence in such lower pleasures as might be open to him.

V

Among the virtues which are based upon the principle of the due subordination of lower to higher impulses may perhaps be included the virtue of Humility. This virtue is unlike the various forms of Temperance inasmuch as the impulse which is subordinated is not of a purely animal character: pride or the high estimation of self is a feeling which, though it may have no doubt an instinctive and almost animal impulse as its basis, arises in its human form from desires peculiar to a rational nature. There is no passion, I may remark in passing, which more obstinately refuses to be resolved into a desire of pleasure on the one hand or into any other impulse, such as love of power, on the other. The love of power is no doubt closely connected with the tendency to self-estimation and self-assertion, but it is not the same thing. Love of power is itself a very clear instance of a 'disinterested desire,' though the fact is often forgotten by Hedonists owing to the plausibility of the attempt to resolve it into love of the pleasures which power will bring. But love of power is not the same thing as pride: it has a closer affinity with vanity. The pleasure of self-approbation can only be explained on the supposition that there is already a love of self-approbation which cannot be resolved into a desire for the pleasure.

The virtue of Humility seems to call for some further examination because it is often brought forward as a palmary instance of the non-utilitarian, and even the non-teleological character, of our highest ethical judgements. From the point of view of hedonistic Utilitarianism the approval of Humility could hardly be justified except on the ground that most people are prone to an over-estimation of self (which involves obvious social

inconveniences), and that it is therefore desirable to aim at the opposite state of feeling in the hope of reaching the desirable mean. But it is not only from a hedonistic point of view that we may feel a difficulty in admitting that there can be anything virtuous in an untruthful estimate of one's own powers, attainments, or achievements, whether in the moral, the intellectual, or any other sphere. The Idealist will feel bound, more even than the Hedonist, to aim at Truth; and it may be doubted whether the undiscriminating exaltation of Humility, considered as an under-appreciation of self, is the best means of attaining this end. It might be urged that it is more likely to lead to profession, on occasions when such profession will be belauded, of an estimate which is not really entertained. And yet it can hardly be seriously maintained that there is nothing of permanent worth in the Christian ideal of Humility beyond a common-sense precept that it is well to think rather less of oneself than one is naturally inclined to do for fear of thinking too much. The frequent exaggerations and occasional gross aberrations of Christian sentiment on this matter may be admitted: and yet we have only to think of Aristotle's revolting picture of the high-souled man (μεγαλόψυχος)[1] to realize that even the least Christian modern Moralist will recoil from that proud insistence upon one's own merits which is more or less the tendency of all pagan thought, at least till the second century of the Christian era, upon this matter. The solution of the difficulty seems to be that we should approve a truthful estimate of one's own powers and merits as being most favourable to moral progress, to intellectual self-development, and to social usefulness; but that we should disapprove of any habitual dwelling with satisfaction upon one's own capacities or one's own merits for two reasons. Any true or worthy conception of the moral ideal places too great a gulf between that ideal and the actual performance (in his own view) even of a good man to permit him any great self-complacency at the thought that he is better than the majority of his neighbours.

[1] *Ethic. Nicomach.*, IV, § 3 (p. 1123*b*). Of course I am aware of the explanations by which all superior people are accustomed to defend the Aristotelian ideal.

In most men at least this feeling will be strengthened by the recognition that the difference between themselves and their fellows is largely due to the influence of others in the present or the past, and not to any efforts which begin exclusively with themselves. To use theological language, the good man will ascribe his goodness to 'grace,' recognizing that his good qualities are due in the first instance to parentage, influence, example, social tradition, education, community, Church, and ultimately, if he is a religious man, to God: he will care for goodness too much for its own sake to treat it as a ground for self-satisfaction at his own achievement as compared with that of others.[1] And that brings us to the second ground upon which the high ethical value of the Humility may be considered to rest. The good man cares too much for others to derive pleasure from the thought that they are worse than himself. His highest goodness is too much pervaded by the impulse of self-communication to be regarded as a private possession which is enjoyed because it is he that has it rather than some one else. The Saint cannot help being aware that he has certain qualities of character which many men lack, but so far from wishing to keep his virtues to himself he will wish that they were common as the air of heaven, that 'all the Lord's people were prophets.' He will, moreover, recognize in others goodness, or at least capacities of goodness, which will prevent his treating the worst of men with anything

[1] It may be objected that if a man is to ascribe his virtues (in a sense) to God or the Universe, so may he his vices. Humility will be saved at the expense of Remorse. In so far as this difficulty is theological or metaphysical, I shall deal with it in the chapter on Free-will (Book III, chap. iii): from the merely ethical point of view I should contend that, just as the consideration I am insisting on is not inconsistent with a due approval of and satisfaction in one's own good qualities, so the reflection that a man did not make his own original bad tendencies will not be inconsistent with disapproval of those tendencies and dissatisfaction with himself so long as he yields to them. The same consideration will condemn an exaggerated contemplation of one's own original bad tendencies no less than exaggerated self-complacency at one's good ones. If the good man will be more disposed to dwell upon the share of other persons or of the Universe in the production of his good qualities than upon their share in the production of his bad ones, that is because it is morally healthier, more conducive to moral progress, to do so.

approaching contempt. When those capacities are unrealized, he will feel sorrow and pity rather than smug self-complacency. It is not so much by his opinion of himself that the Aristotelian 'magnanimous man' disgusts us as by his contempt for other people. Humility then turns out to be no separate, distinct, isolated, non-social virtue [1]—a sort of arbitrary appendix to the code of duty to one's neighbour introduced (as seems to be suggested in some quarters) by special divine decree for the express purpose of showing the inadequacy of all rational principles of Morality. The duty flows directly from the general principle of the individual's subordination to the whole society. Any attempt to cultivate the virtue in and for itself is likely to be suicidal: it is simply one particular aspect of the ideal attitude towards the moral ideal on the one hand and towards one's neighbour on the other. Pride means self-absorption; Humility is simply the consequence of absorption in something higher and something wider. Just as true Benevolence does not involve absolute forgetfulness or neglect of self, so true Humility does not demand a voluntary ignorance of one's real capacities or character, or forbid the assertion of one's claims in ways consistent with due respect for the claims of others. Humility only involves a due subordination of self-love to those social impulses in the satisfaction of which alone the true or higher self-love can attain its end. True Humility is but an aspect of true love of one's neighbour.

VI

The question of Suicide is one of so exceptional a character that a writer on Ethics may fairly be asked how he proposes to deal with it. It will be unnecessary to enlarge upon the various utilitarian reasons against suicide in the vast majority of cases. Even if life be hedonistically not worth living, it

[1] That Humility is really a kind of Charity is well recognized by St. Thomas Aquinas, who is entirely free from the medieval tendency to encourage excessive self-debasement. He condemns 'Pusillanimitas' as severely as Aristotle. In principle he exactly hits the weak points of the Aristotelian ideal when he condemns the vainglorious man, because 'appetitum gloriae suae non refert in debitum finem, puta ad honorem Dei, vel proximi salutem' (*Summa Theol.*, II, Pt. ii, Q. 132).

is possible to do something to diminish its miseries. Only if there were reason to hope that the practice could be largely imitated, would a pessimistic Hedonism include suicide among its duties. It is only when a man's life becomes burdensome to others as well as to himself that the hedonistic Utilitarian would seem logically bound to sanction it. When, however, life is looked upon as possessing value on other than hedonistic grounds, it can no longer be pronounced to have lost that value the moment it ceases to yield a balance of pleasure on the whole either to the individual or to society. This consideration is amply sufficient to condemn the act in a vast number of cases in which it might seem rational enough on hedonistic grounds. It would not tend to a right estimate of the relative importance of the higher and lower goods for a man to give up the struggle to live nobly the moment he begins to doubt whether it is hedonistically worth the pain that it costs, or for society to allow him to do so as soon as his services cease to bring it a net gain of pleasure. It may be thought, however, that even allowing its due weight to this consideration, there are extreme cases in which it becomes difficult to defend the peremptory rule of modern Christianity when once it is admitted that pain is an evil. There are times when life seems to have lost its value from an intellectual and a moral point of view as well as from a hedonistic one. When life has reduced itself to a slow and painful process of dying, why, it may be thought, should we prolong a useless agony which seems to be as incompatible with moral effort as with enjoyment of life? On this question I will only make the following remarks, premising that they are not intended as a full and adequate discussion of the subject:

(1) It is impossible, as I have several times remarked, to construct *de novo* an ideal of human life without taking into consideration the actual constitution of human nature, including feelings about conduct which from a purely rational point of view seem difficult to account for. I do not regard the existence of such feelings as final arguments for or against particular kinds of conduct. They cannot dispense us from the necessity of passing upon them our judgements of value. It is always possible that such feelings, however strong and widely diffused, may

in some cases be feelings which Reason must disregard. But when in a general way the feeling commends itself to us as possessing high moral value, or as intimately associated with what possesses high value, the wise man will hesitate to defy it in particular cases, even though *a priori* he might have been inclined to doubt whether its value is great enough to overbalance what is sacrificed to it.

(2) Although the value of the higher life is not dependent upon its duration, the comparative valuation of higher and lower goods may be considerably affected by the answer which is given to the question how long the consequences of moral effort may be expected to last. There are many cases in which I should myself be unable to regard as rational the prohibition of suicide without admitting the postulate of Immortality. The good will is possible even in extremest agony, but the good will is not all that is necessary for Well-being; and it does not seem possible to decide whether the continuance of moral discipline is worth the prolongation of an existence from which all else that gives value to life has departed without asking what are to be the fruits of this moral discipline, whether it is rational to hope for another state in which the character thus formed may have further opportunities of expressing itself in moral activity and of producing that happiness without which all other good must be incomplete. I may add that this is almost the only case (unless we include also the somewhat parallel question of infanticide) in which the answer to any detailed question of Ethics can rationally be affected by the answer that is given to a theological problem [1]. Our attitude towards Morality in general—the whole tone and temper of our ethical life—is likely to be profoundly modified by our acceptance or rejection of fundamental theological ideas; but I hardly know of any other detailed question of Casuistry (except of course those connected with what may be called in the narrower sense religious or ecclesiastical duties), about which what is the rational solution for a Christian or a Theist could be pronounced irrational for one who does not think it reasonable to entertain even the hope of Immortality.

[1] The question is theological in so far as the belief in Immortality rests on Theism: it is of course possible to believe in Immortality without believing in God.

(3) We shall hereafter have to consider the weight which an individual ought to attach to those ethical judgements of other men which have taken shape in established rules and institutions, and in particular to the ethical judgement of the best men—in a word the place of Authority in Ethics. This is precisely a case in which the wise man will feel bound to remember the great weight of authority to which the absolute rule against suicide may appeal[1]. A strong feeling against suicide seems to be the spontaneous deliverance of the moral consciousness, wherever the Christian view of life, with its ideas of discipline, education, or moral probation, and its sense of responsibility to a divine Father, is accepted. It was the acceptance of this faith by a society in which suicide was one of the commonest ways of quitting life which created the modern tradition on the subject. The strength of the feeling is the more remarkable in the entire absence of any express prohibition either in the Jewish or the Christian scriptures. Any one who sympathizes with this general view of life will give its due weight to this accumulation of authority before he proceeds

[1] No doubt it may be urged that there may be just as many possible opportunities of moral discipline in another life as there are in this, and that we might as reasonably refuse to inoculate against small-pox, on account of the moral discipline which small-pox may involve, as refuse to cure a diseased life by a voluntary death. (Cf. Hume's *Essay on Suicide*.) I should submit that the two cases are not parallel. We do know tolerably well the consequences of curing disease or refusing to cure it, and we judge that, though there is some good to be got by voluntary endurance of pain, there is more good to be got on the whole by fighting against it, and using one's life for work and for enjoyment. In the case of Suicide we do not know enough about the consequences of the two alternatives to make such a comparison of moral advantages and disadvantages. We do not know whether, if opportunities of moral discipline and self-improvement are voluntarily thrown away here, other such opportunities will be afforded in another life. I freely admit, however, that such merely negative considerations would not be sufficient to condemn Suicide, but for the strong moral instinct against it which seems to accompany a certain stage of moral development—an instinct so strong that it supplies (for those who believe that the course of things is directed by Reason towards an End) a presumption that it has a purpose in the economy of the Universe. I admit that such instincts and the presumptions founded upon them are not final: but a man ought to be very sure of his ground before he overrules them.

to introduce either in theory or practice an exception to this rule, even in those extreme cases where his own unassisted moral consciousness might have felt disposed to do so.

I have been speaking of the general rule. There are no doubt exceptional cases in which suicide, or something which it is difficult to distinguish from suicide, would be generally approved. Where a sufficient object is to be attained by it, the voluntary courting of death becomes the sublimest heroism: and, if it be held that only the actual wielding of the weapon or voluntary swallowing of the poison constitutes suicide, a little ingenuity might possibly reveal exceptional cases where an unselfish object of great importance could only be achieved by such an act of self-slaughter. The strong feeling against multiplying such cases or accustoming men even to contemplate their possibility is, as I have contended, a healthy one. I will only venture to suggest a doubt whether the idea that it is an absolute duty, under all circumstances, to prolong life to the last moment at which medical skill and care can prolong it is not sometimes carried to extremes. It is a remarkable fact that when it was rumoured that the imprisoned Europeans in Pekin had determined in the last resort to shoot themselves and their wives, rather than face certain torture and dishonour at the hands of the barbarians, not a word was heard in condemnation of that resolve. When the alternative between a more or a less painful form of death is brought about by disease and not by human agency, are we bound to choose the more painful? May it not at least be said that, when disease has reached a certain point, the Physician may frankly recognize that his primary aim should be to save pain, even though this should involve some shortening of life? And perhaps this is not going much beyond the actual practice of the medical profession in recent times.

I cannot but feel that in my treatment of this question I may seem to some to be hesitating between a frank acceptance and a thorough-going rejection of what are commonly called 'Intuitions.' But the reason for this is, I believe, to be sought in the nature of things, in the real difficulty of distinguishing mere feelings or aversions which may be only prejudices due to inheritance or environment or superstition from real judgements

of value[1]. And yet I am clear that the two things must be distinguished. Incest is not wrong simply because it shocks me, but because I judge that the feeling which revolts from incest is one which deserves respect. The idea of eating rat's flesh inspires me with horror, but under some circumstances I am clear that it would be a duty to eat it. There are cases where it is less easy to discriminate between pathological aversion and moral condemnation. The only approach to a test by which to effect such a discrimination that I can suggest is to put the question—does the spontaneous aversion or apparent intuition disappear after full reflection upon the act itself as well as upon all circumstances and consequences? If an intuition—an apparently unaccountable repugnance to some kind of conduct—persists after a due consideration of all the consequences of yielding to it, it may probably be taken to represent not merely a feeling, but a feeling to which the moral Reason attributes intrinsic value. If it disappears, it may be dismissed as a pathological affection, due to mere education or environment, which it is rational to ignore. The aversion to cruelty remains even when we have satisfied ourselves that coursing causes an amount of pleasure to some Englishmen and bull-fighting to most Spaniards which greatly outweighs the pain caused

[1] 'As knowledge arises unperceived from the excitations of experience, it develops a host of prepossessions, partly true, partly erroneous. . . . Just in the same way there arise from the original nature of the mind and the silently working influences of circumstances many prepossessions, some true and some erroneous, concerning what we ought to do; if we examine ourselves, we find that at first it is only belief in Duty in general and in binding laws of action that stands out with clearness and self-evidence; but what these laws are, and how far we can comprehend them in their purity, depends partly upon the influence of external conditions of life, which moderate or excite our blind impulses, partly upon the accuracy with which, in reflection, we separate the general commands of Conscience from the individual forms in which, as applicable to the particular circumstances of our own life, they first press themselves upon us' (Lotze, *Microcosmus*, E. T., I, pp. 710–1). How far a study of the psychological and evolutionary origin of our moral intuitions or instincts may assist the process of discrimination between permanently valid moral judgements and inherited prejudices or survivals of an earlier morality, I have considered in a later chapter (Book III, chap. iv).

to hare and bull and horses. On the other hand a Jew or an eastern Christian probably experiences no less horror at the thought of eating blood-pudding, and a strictly educated Scotchman at the thought of Sunday music. But in these cases, when the man learns the history of the traditions about Sabbath-observance and the eating of blood, he ceases to attach any moral value or authority to the scruple, though for a time the mere subjective feelings may retain something of their old intensity.

In most cases it is possible in this way to break up an intuitive moral feeling into the feeling and the judgement that accompanies it. But in other cases this analysis is by no means easy. I do not believe that there is any infallible logical or psychological process for distinguishing between real judgements of value and mere prejudices or valueless instincts, any more than there is any infallible receipt for correct reasoning. If there were, the difficulties both of ethical speculation and of practical life would for the most part disappear. But the difficulty of the process, of which such a case as that of suicide may be considered the extremest illustration, contains in it nothing to make us doubt:—(1) that Morality ultimately rests upon immediate judgements of value; (2) that a feeling—whether the feeling arises from the contemplation of the act or from the act itself—can legitimately be a ground of action only when approved by a judgement of value; (3) that no moral judgement can be considered final in which the moral Reason has not contemplated all the foreseeable consequences of an action before passing its judgement of value.

VII

So far it has been assumed that the moral criterion is constituted by the effect of the action upon the good of mankind. It seems unnecessary at every turn to add 'and of animals in so far as their good can be promoted by human action': but in strictness (as was contended by John Stuart Mill), this ought, I believe, always to be included. The idea of taking into consideration the good of animals will no doubt seem to many

extravagant. A disposition to minimize the intelligence of animals, and the importance of their sufferings, is a traditional prejudice of the metaphysical mind. The prejudice was no doubt inherited from Theology, but prejudices of theological origin often continue rampant in the philosophical field long after Theology, more in touch with changes of popular sentiment, has got rid of them. Philosophers will not now, like the Cartesian who denied feeling to the brutes or Spinoza who admitted it[1], boldly pronounce that we may do what we like with the animals. But still there is an unwillingness to admit that the sufferings of animals really matter. It is, we are told by writers of the school of Green, not in the interest of animal well-being, but in that of our own humanity that we ought to avoid causing them unnecessary suffering. I have already dwelt upon the illogicality of this position in speaking of the question whether pleasure is part of the end for mankind. The same considerations which apply to the case of human pleasure apply also to that of animals. If the suffering of animals is no evil, it cannot be inhumane in me to cause it. If it is an evil, it must be my duty to prevent it. The well-being of animals then—whatever well-being they are capable of—seems to me quite distinctly to possess some value, and therefore to form part of that good which constitutes the ethical end. From a practical point of view no doubt the duty becomes very much more of a negative than a positive one. For it rarely happens in practice that we can do much

[1] 'Nec tamen nego bruta sentire: sed nego, quod propterea non liceat nostrae utilitati consulere et iisdem ad libitum uti, eademque tractare, prout nobis magis convenit; quandoquidem nobiscum natura non conveniunt et eorum affectus ab affectibus humanis sunt natura diversi' (*Ethica*, P. IV, Prop. XXXVII, Schol. 1). Such is Spinoza's quite logical deduction from the theory which bases my neighbour's claims simply upon the fact that my good and his are 'a common good,' and not on the fact that each has value. Perhaps the first Philosopher to assert strongly the duty of humanity to animals was Schopenhauer, who condemns Kant for resting it merely upon the tendency of cruelty to spread from beast to man, instead of treating animals as (in their way) ends in themselves (*Die Grundlegung d. Moral.*, § 8, E. T., p. 94). The claims of animals are fully recognized by Höffding (*Ethik*, pp. 172, 173): 'That the beast is not to be treated as a mere means, follows at once from his capacity for pain.'

to promote the positive well-being of animals, at least of animals not in a state of captivity; and, although we do assign some value to the well-being of domestic animals, it is, we think, of very small value in comparison with that which we set upon human well-being. While, therefore, we should condemn the infliction of needless torture upon the brutes, we should generally condemn any large expenditure of human energy in ministering to their comforts and luxuries. What is the comparative value of animal pleasure or of the avoidance of animal suffering as compared either with human pleasure and pain or with the higher good of man is a question on which wide differences of opinion exist, as is shown by the much-debated question of Vivisection. I do not propose now to discuss that problem in detail. I will merely say that from the point of view which I have taken up it is not possible either to deny that it may sometimes be right to inflict unmerited suffering upon an animal or to declare that no amount of animal suffering can be of any importance when compared with the smallest amount of human convenience or the smallest accession to human knowledge. The whole question is one of comparative value: and that is one which no formula can settle [1].

It will be observed that I have assumed that the sole good of which animals are capable is pleasure, and that for them there exists no evil but pain. Such is the only hypothesis on which, in our profound ignorance of animal minds, it seems reasonable to act. No doubt it would be difficult to deny that the domestication or education of animals, in some cases amounting almost to their participation in human friendship, may constitute a sort of higher good, and may be looked upon as possessing something more than a merely hedonistic value: but I cannot follow an enthusiastic writer in the *International Journal of Ethics* who has lately contended that animals have a right not merely to pleasure but to 'self-realization [2].'

[1] The only adequate and philosophical discussion of the question which I have seen is to be found in Edmund Gurney's essay in *Tertium Quid*. He decides for a moderate and strictly regulated permission of Vivisection.

[2] *The Rights of Animals*, by Henry S. Salt (Jan., 1900).

VIII

The view of Ethics which has now been sketched lacks a recognized name, and it is a misfortune that it does so: for modes of thought which have no names often fail to obtain the currency of those which have. The term Utilitarianism is irretrievably associated with Hedonism; and the word Intuitionism, which is commonly used to denote the opposite of Utilitarianism, is inevitably suggestive of the crude and absurd theory that the morality of an act can be determined apart from its consequences. And yet the view expounded in this chapter has been widely held. It is the view of Plato and of Aristotle, though in them there is always a tendency to make Morality consist in the pursuit of the individual's own well-being, unhedonistically understood, strongly as it was asserted, especially by Plato, that the individual's own good was essentially bound up with that of his society. It was the view of all the older English Moralists, in whom Platonic and Aristotelian traditions were universalized by Christianity—the view of Cumberland, of the Cambridge Platonists, and (substantially) of Clarke. It was equally the view of the Moral Sense school, which arose when in Locke the rationalistic tendency had sunk back into Theological Hedonism: for Hutcheson, the author of the famous 'greatest happiness of the greatest number[1]' formula, recognized the superior 'dignity' of some pleasures and of some persons as compared with that of others. It was very seldom, indeed, that the proposition that Morality consists in promoting the true well-being of human society was ever formally denied before the time of Butler in England[2] and of Kant in Germany[3]. The ethical system of Kant

[1] Hutcheson actually used the phrase 'for the greatest numbers.'

[2] And by him explicitly only in the *Dissertation*. In the *Sermons* he still often adopts the Utilitarian test, though he treats conscience as a sort of magical key to Utility.

[3] I do not say that the proposition was always positively asserted. This was prevented partly by the influence of ideas of Natural Rights derived from the conception of Natural Law and partly by the idea of particular

(assisted in England by the influence of Butler and his followers) has produced a hopeless confusion between the question whether Morality consists in promoting an end and the question what that end is. From that confusion Moral Philosophy has hardly yet emerged: and we still occasionally find eminent writers arguing that Morality consists in doing certain things that one feels a mysterious prompting to do without knowing why one does them or seeking to harmonize and co-ordinate the isolated, instinctive, unanalysed deliverances of the individual moral consciousness. But there is observable a very general tendency to come back to the view of the older seventeenth-century writers, and to assert that Morality consists in the promotion of true human good, but a good of which pleasure is only an element. Janet in France, in Germany Lotze (though he has hardly elaborated a Moral Philosophy), and more recently Paulsen, may be mentioned among the writers who have contributed to this tendency[1]. If it is not the view of Hegel, in whom Moral Philosophy is practically merged in political Philosophy, it is at least the view of many who call themselves his disciples[2]. And yet the system remains without a name. Non-hedonistic Utilitarianism might serve the turn, though a definition by negation is unsatisfactory. Idealistic Utilitarianism would do better, though the term is too apt to suggest a metaphysical, instead of a purely ethical, position. Professor Paulsen has suggested that 'teleological' Ethics should be contrasted with unteleological or 'formalistic' Ethics[3]. This is an excellent classification, but unfortunately we still lack a neat and recognized term to denote the view of Ethics which is at once teleological and anti-hedonistic. On the whole, perhaps, the term 'ideal Utilitarianism[4]' seems the best that is available. Eudae-

precepts not discoverable by Reason but enjoined by express divine Revelation.

[1] Lotze often approaches very near to the position of pure Hedonism, but he is saved from it by his admission of a qualitative difference in pleasure.

[2] Notably Dr. McTaggart, if we are to include that very original thinker among 'Hegelians.' I may also mention Mr. Moore's *Principia Ethica* as a striking expression of the same view of Ethics.

[3] *A System of Ethics*, Eng. Trans., by Prof. F. Tilly, 1899.

[4] In so far as he is teleological and not hedonistic, I might include among

monistic Ethics might better serve to distinguish such a view from the rigorist or ascetic theory which refuses even to include pleasure in its conception of the end; but (through the persistent misrepresentation of certain writers) the term Eudaemonism has become too much confused with Hedonism to be wholly free from ambiguity. The term Utilitarianism will perhaps sufficiently suggest that we do estimate actions by their tendency to promote human good, and 'Utility' will always carry with it some suggestion of pleasure; while the qualification 'ideal' will remind us that the good for which we seek is not a conception got by abstraction from a number of empirically given experiences of pleasure or pain, but an ideal set up by rational judgements of value passed upon all the elements of our actual experience.

the supporters of 'Ideal Utilitarianism' the distinguished German thinker, Eduard von Hartmann, whose writings appear to me to be the most important of recent contributions to the subject. But von Hartmann insists that the true end, and consequently the true Ethic, is not positively but negatively Eudaemonistic ('privativ-eudämonistische'). This seems to imply three differences from ordinary Hedonism: (1) Inasmuch as positive happiness or good of any kind is unattainable, the object of the moral man must be to diminish the evil of the Universe, partly for the sake of the persons immediately affected, and partly with a view to assist the efforts of the Absolute to reach the one ultimately desirable good (all consciousness being necessarily attended with more pain than pleasure)—a relapse into its original state of Unconsciousness; (2) the true ethical end must include other elements of Value besides pleasure ('Unter dem Gesichtspunkte eines ethischen Zweckes ergeben sich andere Wertbestimmungen für alle Dinge und Seelenvorgänge als unter dem Gesichtspunkte des ästhetischen, religiösen, eudämonistischen, intellektualischen.'—*Ethische Studien*, p. 128); (3) Morality, though an end-in-itself to us, is from the point of view of the Universe merely a means to a further end (as to this see below, Bk. III, chap. ii). It is clear that the first and the third modifications are dictated by a pessimistic system of Metaphysics which I do not share, and seem to have no necessary connexion with the second, which is not at all suggested by the term 'negative Eudaemonism.' With this reservation his view of the relation to each of the various elements in the end—hedonistic, intellectual, moral—seems to me peculiarly well balanced, except that his desire to show the unattainability of positive Well-being makes him exaggerate the difficulties and underestimate the utility (restricted as I myself believe it to be) of the 'hedonistic calculus.' All these difficulties would equally have to be met in determining how to attain a minimum of pain.

IX

Some of the objections most frequently urged against such a view of Ethics will be considered in our later books. But there is one to which I may briefly reply at once. The view that we have arrived at is that the morality of our actions is to be determined ultimately by its tendency to promote a universal end, which end itself consists of many ends, and in particular two—Morality and pleasure. Against this position it may be objected that if two (or more) goods are brought together, neither of them will remain unaltered. The different ends cannot simply exist side by side: the difference between them must be 'transcended.' 'That two elements should necessarily come together, and at the same time that neither of them should be qualified by this relation, or again that a relation in the end should not imply a whole which subordinates and qualifies the two terms—all this in the end seems unintelligible [1].' I have alluded to this objection here because it seems to be directed against an ethical position more or less resembling my own. It is easy enough to expose any system to ridicule when the critic deliberately introduces into the statement of it features which have no place in the minds or the writings of those whom he criticizes, and ignores much which they both think and say. I do not know any writer who has maintained that the good consists of two elements—happiness and virtue—which are unaltered by their relation to each other. At all events, in these pages nothing has been said, and nothing is implied, about the different elements in the end not being qualified by the relation in which they stand to one another: and much has been said of a directly opposite tendency. I have insisted that the recognition of differences among pleasures means the qualification of pleasure by other elements in consciousness—knowledge or virtue or whatever it is, and that, on the other

[1] Bradley, *Appearance and Reality*, 2nd ed., p. 426. The criticism is indeed directed against the idea of a good consisting of only two ends—happiness and goodness—for which the present writer does not contend, but in principle the objection might equally be brought against any view which recognized a good consisting in a number of goods.

hand, the idea of pleasure is so intimately bound up with all that we call good that it is impossible to form any conception of an ideal Virtue or contemplation of Beauty which includes no kind or degree of pleasure. We can give no account of '*the* good' without breaking it up into various 'goods'; and yet no one element in the good can be unaffected by the relation into which it is brought in the consciousness of the person enjoying it with the other elements in that good. In particular, the value which is set upon the good will determines the kind of pleasure which can be regarded as good by the good man. What the benevolent man regards as good for self is a different thing from what a selfish man regards as his good. The pleasure which is derived from culture is a different thing from the pleasure which comes from other sources just because the goodness of culture does not lie solely in its pleasantness. For the ideal man placed in favourable circumstances it will be impossible to draw a sharp line between the good for himself and the good for others: for he finds his good largely in activities useful to others, and the indulgences which apart from their bad effects on others he might enjoy he can enjoy no longer when he knows those effects. The ideal end or good for man is not a number of goods lying side by side and having no relation to one another, but a particular kind of life in which various elements are harmoniously combined. Undoubtedly the elements are altered by their relations, just as the notes of a chord or the instruments of an orchestra produce together an effect which is different from what each of them produces by itself. But there could be no musical notation unless we could distinguish these elements and speak of the whole—the chord or the harmony—as produced by their combination. That the whole is the sum of the parts is true, though it is not the whole truth: for it is equally true that the whole is more than that sum. Every attempt to distinguish the elements of which the ideal good is made up involves some abstraction. But, as no one has taught us more convincingly than Mr. Bradley himself, all thought involves abstraction. We could give no intelligible account of the good except by regarding it as a combination of goods. Further reply to Mr. Bradley's somewhat lofty and contemptuous remarks upon the tendency

of what he calls 'popular Ethics[1]' must be left to the further course of our argument. The objections apply to every system of Ethics which has attempted to give any intelligible account of 'the good'—that is to say, to almost every system of Ethics except perhaps Mr. Bradley's own. They all represent the good life as an ideal in which many distinguishable elements are harmonized and combined[2]. From such a view Mr. Bradley is estopped by his doctrine of an essential and unavoidable contradiction in the deliverances of the moral consciousness—a doctrine which will be dealt with in another chapter. Meanwhile, it may be observed in passing that Mr. Bradley's own objection can be retorted with some effect upon his system, in which 'self-assertion' and 'self-sacrifice' are pronounced equally good in complete isolation from each other without any attempt being made to build up a coherent and harmonious ideal of life in which each shall find its proper place. If the moral consciousness were incapable of making such an attempt, Mr. Bradley could not be blamed for leaving the matter there: it will hereafter be contended that the moral consciousness lies under no such incapacity, however difficult in detail may be the problems to which this collision gives rise[3].

[1] No writer is really so much open to the objection just mentioned as Kant himself, whom even Mr. Bradley will hardly treat as a representative of 'popular Ethics.'

[2] Dorner is right in protesting that 'das Sittliche eine Totalität, eine Einheit ist, die nicht mosaikartig sich zusammensetzen lässt' (*Das menschliche Handeln*, 1895, p. 53).

[3] Book II, chap. iii.

CHAPTER VIII

JUSTICE

I

We have so far been engaged in considering the nature of the various goods, or elements in *the* good, which it is the individual's duty to realize for human society. But to say that it is our duty to produce the greatest possible good is a principle which cannot by itself determine the right course of action in any single instance. There remains the question, 'Whose good is to be promoted?' We want a principle to guide us as to the distribution of good among the various persons capable of enjoying it: and we have so far been content to take as our guide Bentham's principle 'Every one to count for one and nobody for more than one,' though we have already given to this maxim the somewhat different form 'Everybody's good to be treated as of equal value with *the like good* of every one else.' This modification must now be further explained and justified. I have already said as much as seemed necessary about Justice in the popular sense of the term, the relative or conventional Justice which prescribes equal treatment of different individuals upon the basis of some established and accepted social order or constitution or system of understandings. We have here to deal with the absolute Justice by whose precepts the morality of the very social order or constitution or system of understandings must itself be determined. If in this chapter I shall seem to be straying into subjects which belong more properly to Political Philosophy or even to Political Economy than to Ethics, I may plead that any treatment of Ethics which does not touch upon such questions must necessarily be theoretically barren and practically unprofitable. Man is a social being, and it is impossible to determine his duties, or even to examine into the abstract

nature of duty, without dealing to some extent with his relations to the social environment in which he finds himself.

Now, when we ask 'What is Justice?', we are at once met by two conflicting ideals, each of which on the face of it seems entitled to respect. In the first place the principle that every human being is of equal intrinsic value, and is therefore entitled to equal respect, is one which commends itself to common sense, a principle which may naturally claim to be the exacter expression of the Christian ideal of Brotherhood. On the other hand the principle that the good ought to be preferred to the bad, that men ought to be rewarded according to their goodness or according to their work, is one which no less commends itself to the unsophisticated moral consciousness. We shall perhaps best arrive at some true idea of the nature of Justice by examining the claims of these two rival and *prima facie* inconsistent ideals—the ideal of equality, considered in the sense of equality of consideration, and the ideal of just recompense or reward—and we shall perhaps do well to start with the suspicion that there will be a considerable presumption against any solution of the problem which does not recognize some meaning or element of truth in each of them.

II

In examining the doctrine of 'every one to count for one and nobody for more than one' in its Benthamite form, it is essential to bear in mind the context in which it stands. It was put forward by Bentham (not, of course, for the first time) as a canon for the distribution of happiness. He saw clearly enough that his 'greatest happiness' principle, or the principle of greatest good (however good be interpreted), stands in need of this or some other supplementary canon before it can be available for practical application. It is obvious that in a community of a hundred persons we might produce the greatest possible happiness or good in a variety of ways. It would be quite legitimate, so far as the greatest happiness principle is concerned, to give the whole of our disposable good to twenty-five out of the hundred, and to ignore the other seventy-five, provided that by so doing we could make each of these twenty-five four times as

happy as we should make each of the hundred by an equal distribution; and, if by an unequal distribution we could make twenty-five people five times as happy, or give them five times as much good (whatever the true good be) as we could procure for each of the hundred by an equal distribution, we should be absolutely bound by our 'greatest good' principle (taken by itself) to ignore the seventy-five, and distribute our good exclusively among the five-and-twenty. The principle which Bentham adopted as a solution of such problems is the maxim 'Every one to count for one and nobody for more than one.' He failed to see how impossible it is to establish such a principle by experience or to rest it upon anything but an *a priori* judgement. Only a grammatical ellipse dispensed him from the necessity of expanding it into the 'Every man ought to count for one, &c.,' and so introducing an 'ought'—that mystical, meaningless word of which he is said to have pronounced that, if it is to be used at all, it ought to be banished from the Dictionary.

The maxim then does not assert that every one ought to receive an equal share of wealth, or of political power, or of social consideration, but simply equal consideration in the distribution of ultimate good. Bentham was no Socialist; at heart he was not much of a democrat. Equality of political power, when in later years he advocated it, was for him merely a means to secure that legislation should aim at giving every one, as far as possible, an equal share of whatever 'good' legislation is capable of securing. The value of the maxim is not much affected by the fact that Bentham himself recognized no good but pleasure.

Now so long as the amount of good would be neither increased nor diminished by an equal distribution, the justice of such a rule will hardly be disputed. Understood in this abstract sense, the rule merely asserts that, if you have a certain quantity of good to divide between *A* and *B*, you ought to give half to *A* and half to *B*, so long as all you know about them is that one is *A* and the other *B*, or 'other things being equal,' or 'so long as there is no reason for preferring *A* to *B*.' How far the axiom ought to be modified in its practical application by the fact that

A never does differ from *B* solely in being a different individual, and what kind of inequality between *A* and *B* supplies reasonable ground for an inequality in the shares assigned to them, are questions which have yet to be considered. But it can hardly be denied that equality is the right rule for distributive Justice in the absence of any special reason for inequality.

Our first difficulty arises in the case where an equal distribution of good necessarily diminishes the amount of good to be distributed. It is clear that this is often the case. It is easy to imagine cases where the difficulty occurs in connexion with an actual distribution of a definite material good thing to a definite and assignable number of persons. In a beleaguered garrison nobody would question the justice of an equal distribution of rations; but supposing it were known that relief could not arrive for a month, and that the provisions available could keep half of them alive, while an equal distribution would ensure the slow starvation of the whole, there would be something to be said for casting lots as to which half should be fed and which should starve. I do not maintain that the conditions indicated could ever be exactly forthcoming, or even that the course suggested would be actually the right one to take if they were. But, if that course would not be right in the case supposed, it must be for some other reason than its injustice. No one would be bold enough to propose that the whole garrison should starve simply to ensure an ideal equality between all the individuals concerned. The kind of Socialism that insists that all should be miserable rather than that any one should be made a little happier than anybody else has been justly described as 'Individualism run mad.' In a less extreme form the difficulty I have indicated is of constant occurrence. The Schoolmaster, for instance, has to face the problem how far a whole class is to be kept back that the ultra-stupid minority may learn something. And when we turn from detailed questions of individual conduct to large problems of social and political action, the case supposed is not the exception but the rule. Nobody will deny that the present distribution of good things is excessively and arbitrarily unequal. The most satisfied champion of the existing social order will not deny that many people are badly clothed,

badly fed, overworked, and otherwise miserable through no fault of their own. And yet the most extreme advocate of social reconstruction, who is at once sane and well informed, will hardly deny that any attempt to produce an immediate equality of possessions, or of happiness, or of opportunity (whichever it be), would only cure these inequalities by producing, in no long period, a general dead-level of misery and want, or (to put it at the lowest) by seriously diminishing the ultimate Well-being of the country or the race. Here, then, an unequal distribution has to be adopted in order that there may be something to distribute. Either we may say (from a rough, practical point of view) that equality is a good but is not the good, and that we must in practice balance the principle of greatest good against the principle of equality, or (with more scientific precision) we may assert that in such cases there is no real sacrifice of equality. The law is fulfilled even in the case where its practical operation seems to involve the height of inequality, just as the laws of motion are fulfilled when two opposite forces neutralize each other and produce rest. For what the individual is entitled to is simply equality of consideration. The individual has had his rights even when the equal rights of others demand that in practice he should receive no good at all, but even a considerable allowance of evil. It would be the height of injustice, indeed, that the good of ninety among a hundred people should be considered, and the Well-being of the remaining ten wholly ignored. The ninety and the ten are entitled to consideration precisely in the ratio of ninety to ten. The rights of the ten would be grossly violated, if the ninety were to do what would be best for themselves were the remaining ten out of the way; as, for instance, by dividing among themselves all the available provisions, and giving none to the excluded ten. On the other hand there are cases where it would not only be expedient, but just, that ten men should die that the remaining ninety might live, e.g. in war, where an indefensible position has to be defended merely to delay an enemy's advance. In such cases the minority gets its rights as fully as the majority, provided its proportionate claim to consideration has been duly satisfied before it was determined that the measure proposed was on the

whole for the general good. David would have been guilty of no injustice had his choice of Uriah the Hittite for the post of danger been determined by purely military and impersonal considerations.

Not only does the principle of equal consideration not necessarily prescribe any actual equality of Well-being or of the material conditions of Well-being: when properly understood, it does not favour the attempt to draw up *a priori* any detailed list of the 'rights of man.' It is impossible to discover any tangible concrete thing, or even any specific 'liberty of action or acquisition,' to which it can be contended that every individual human being has a right under all circumstances. There are circumstances under which the satisfaction of any and every such right is a physical impossibility. And if every assertion of right is to be conditioned by the clause 'if it be possible,' we might as well boldly say that every man, woman, and child on the earth's surface has a right to £1000 a year. There is every bit as much reason for such an assertion as for maintaining that every one has a right to the means of subsistence, or to three acres and a cow, or to life, or to liberty, or to the Parliamentary franchise, or to propagate his species, or the like. There are conditions under which none of these rights can be given to one man without prejudice to the equal rights of others. There seems, then, to be no 'right of man' which is unconditional, except the right to consideration—that is to say, the right to have his true Well-being (whatever that true Well-being be) regarded as of equal importance in all social arrangements with the Well-being of everybody else. Elaborate expositions of the rights of man are, at best, attempts to formulate the most important actual or legal rights which an application of the principle of equality would require to be conceded to the generality of men at a particular stage of social development. They are all ultimately resolvable into the one supreme and unconditional right—*the right to consideration*; and all particular applications of that principle must be dependent upon circumstances of time and place. What particular legal rights will, in certain conditions of time and place, best conduce to each man being equally considered in the distribution of Well-being, must be ascertained by experience.

In practice most of the crude or dangerous misapplications of the doctrine of equality spring from the attempt to translate an abstract equality of consideration into an immediate equality of concrete possessions, or personal liberties, or political power, or what not. Most of the objections to the doctrine may (I think) be met by bearing in mind the distinction on which I have been dwelling. Thus it might be objected to the principle of equality that an attempt to realize the immediate equality of property, or of some particular kind of property, might be good for the present generation, though it would lead to ultimate anarchy. The objection is met if it be remembered that future generations have rights as well as the present. Generations yet unborn may have the right to consideration; though that is obviously the only right that they are at present capable of enjoying [1].

Then, again, most of the cruder and more direct applications of the equality principle involve the tacit assumption that the legislator has at his command a definite quantity of happiness or other good which he can distribute at his pleasure. A moment's reflection shows that it is never 'good' itself, but simply the conditions of good, that are capable of being 'distributed,' either by the State or by a private individual. This is not (as has sometimes been thought) an objection to Bentham's principle properly understood. It is always possible to aim at an equal distribution of good, to attach equal value to each man's good, to consider each equally, in so far as his Well-being is capable of being affected by our action; but it is not always possible actually to secure this equal distribution of Well-being. Nothing that can possibly be distributed is a good under all circumstances or to all persons. There is no paradise that some people would not contrive to turn into a hell even for themselves. It is obvious that equal conditions of Well-being will not produce equal amounts of actual Well-being to persons of differing mental and bodily constitution. The devotee of equality as a practical watchword will probably say, 'Let the conditions be equally distributed; for the rest, the individual must take

[1] If this mode of statement be thought paradoxical, it may be put in another way—that it is a duty now to respect the rights which future generations will have when they are born.

care of himself.' But such a rule of conduct would actually violate the principle of equal consideration. For the end to be aimed at is not equality of conditions, but equal Well-being, or rather (as already explained) so much equality as is consistent with there being as large as possible an amount of good to distribute. But actual equality in the distribution of any concrete thing might not only diminish the amount to be distributed, but might actually widen the inequalities in the resulting enjoyment. A distribution of food, for instance, which took no account of the varying appetites and needs of different individuals might produce a lower average of actual health and enjoyment than an unequal distribution. To insist on according the same measure of personal liberty to children and to adults, to uncivilized men and to civilized, to the insane or half-witted and to the sane, might actually result in lowering the real Well-being which each and every one might enjoy under an unequal distribution: the amount of liberty might be too great for the Well-being of one class, and too small for that of the other. When we come to the higher sources of human pleasure or to those higher kinds of human good which cannot be expressed in terms of pleasure, it is still more glaringly evident that men's capacities for such goods vary enormously, and that an equal distribution of their material conditions would not result in an actual equality of enjoyment and would therefore be opposed to the principle of equal consideration. We assuredly should not effect an equal distribution of aesthetic enjoyment by subjecting every citizen to a uniform course of artistic education. The variety of men's capacity for different kinds of good constitutes by itself a sufficient condemnation of any attempt to equalize conditions irrespectively of the varying capacity to utilize the conditions and to turn them (so to speak) into actual Well-being. Any social arrangements which should wholly ignore differences of character and ability in the distribution of material goods would not only infallibly diminish the amount of good on the whole, but might even militate against the equal consideration of each individual in the distribution of it. It has often been objected to the Benthamite rule that it would require society to treat the drunken idler

as well as it treats the industrious and capable workman. Such an objection implies a total misunderstanding of the principle. To treat the drunkard in a way which would encourage him in his drunkenness and his idleness—to give him the wages and the liberty which do conduce to Well-being in the sober and industrious—would not really be to consider his good as much as theirs. It would really not be considering his true good at all, to say nothing of the violation of other men's rights involved in placing the man who makes no contribution to the general good in the same position as those who do. To reward the idler as much as the industrious (even if we supposed that the reward would really be for his good) would be to make him count not for one but for several; since his support would impose additional labour on the industrious members of the community. To examine what social arrangements are best fitted to secure a really equal consideration of each man's good is no part of my present undertaking; but it may safely be said that no social arrangements will have that effect which do not in some way secure that men's material conditions shall have some proportion to their varying powers of utilizing them for their own Well-being and that of the whole society.

Many people will be disposed to meet these difficulties by suggesting that the true idea of social justice is 'equality of opportunity.' I should be far from denying the great practical value, within certain limits, of this ideal; though it would be easy to show the impracticability of a literal realization of it: to give everybody really equal opportunities the State would have to supply every child with an equally good mother[1]. But from a theoretical point of view, the ideal itself is open to exactly the same objections as the ideal of equal distribution when applied to so gross and concrete a matter as food. The English navvy would not be given an equal opportunity of making the most of his life by an allowance of food which would seem wanton superfluity to a Japanese soldier[2]. Equally far removed from the ideal of just distribution would it be to furnish equal

[1] Cf. Leslie Stephen's essay on 'Social Equality' in *Social Rights and Duties*, vol. i.

[2] The varying capacity for work is not *here* to the point.

educational opportunities to the dunce and the genius. Here it would, indeed, be difficult to say on which side the inequality would lie. The dunce might want three times the attention that the genius would require in learning to read: while the genius will require for the realization of his capacities a higher education which the dunce is quite incapable of utilizing. It will perhaps be contended that the man who is not capable of profiting by it may be said to 'enjoy' the opportunity as much as the man who is. But this is clearly a mere *façon de parler*. The opportunity is no more a good to the man to whom Nature has denied the capacity for using it than a pair of spectacles is a good to a blind man. But, if by 'equality of opportunity' is to be meant a simple equalization of external conditions irrespective of the individual's power of using it, if we are to eliminate from the inequalities which we are to aim at equalizing all those which are due to the inequality of Nature's bounty, such a principle will lead to some strange results. In that case we shall have satisfied our duty to the idiot by giving him every advantage that we offer to the sane man, while we shall refuse to violate our ideal of equal opportunity by providing him with asylums and keepers, which the sane man does not want. The distinction between men of different race, between the sexes, between the sick and the whole, will have to be equally ignored [1]. In whichever way equality of opportunity is understood, it leads to results which would strike every one as absurd and unjust. 'Equality of opportunity,' however valuable as a rough practical application within certain limits of some deeper principle, cannot be pushed to its logical consequences without absurdity. It leads to such absurdity because it is opposed to the principle of equal con-

[1] Another more formidable difficulty arises if we extend our view to inequalities not of physical constitution, but of physical circumstance. If every member of society or of every local community is to have the full benefit of superior soil, climate, &c., we have Capitalism at once, though the Capitalist is a group instead of an individual. On the other hand, we might ask the Socialist who aims at equality whether he is really prepared to give to the Laplander as much extra advantage as would compensate him for not living in the Riviera, or to penalize the inhabitant of Johannesburg to an extent which would put him on a level even with the Londoner.

sideration which commends itself to us as just, while it cannot always be assumed that it will accord with the principle of maximum good which is no less self-evidently reasonable. Equality of opportunity is only a rational maxim in so far as it leads to greater good on the whole and to a more equal distribution of that good. And it is always possible that some measure of inequality of opportunity may lead both to the existence of more good on the whole, and to a more equal distribution of that good. The institution of the family necessarily involves great inequality of opportunity, and yet it is possible that the system under which each child is looked after by its own mother leads to each getting a higher average of attention than would be secured under a system of State crèches and boarding-schools, which after all would not eliminate the necessary inequality of opportunity arising from the varying capacity of different educators. While there can be little doubt that a much greater measure of 'equality of opportunity' is socially desirable, it is not to be assumed that the total extinction of more or less hereditary classes enjoying a certain superiority of wealth, of culture, and consequently of opportunity, is necessarily conducive to the public interest; though the progressive diminution of such differences is undoubtedly involved in every attempt to raise the material, intellectual, and moral level of the least favoured classes. So far as superior opportunity secures on the whole superior efficiency in certain kinds of work by which all benefit, the superior opportunity will receive a social justification, and so be not unjust.

How far the principle of equal consideration requires or would be promoted by an unequal distribution of actual goods is a practical question which I do not desire here to discuss. Any distribution of good things which the world has actually seen is, of course, just as far removed from an equal distribution of actual good as it is from an equal distribution of the conditions or opportunities of Well-being. Whether, on the principle of equal consideration, a particular step towards greater equality ought to be promoted or resisted, will depend upon the question whether, under existing conditions—things being what they are, human nature being what it is, and so on—the change will be in

the interest of all, the interest of each being regarded as of exactly equal importance. That equality of consideration would be violated by immediate attempts at forcible and sudden social reconstruction will be generally admitted. But that is not all. A certain liberty of action is, and always will be, a condition of Well-being; and liberty of action implies inequality. It implies *some* power of appropriating to one's self the results of one's own activity, or of disposing of them to others. Granted that necessary *work* might be parcelled out by the State, it is difficult to see how rational beings could occupy their leisure, either in a way agreeable to themselves or in a way favourable to the development of intelligence and character, without a power of voluntarily disposing of their activities in such a way as to constitute an inequality of enjoyment, either for themselves or for persons immediately dependent upon them or favoured by them. And it is impossible that those inequalities should not be the parent of other inequalities. The man who has been benefited by association with a man of exceptional talent, or learning, or skill, will pass on his exceptional advantages to others. A town which has been blessed with inhabitants of exceptional energy and character will enjoy advantages which the State could not possibly transfer to others, though it might make it its business artificially to destroy them. A remorseless application of the principle of equality would not only be fatal to the family but would involve the enforcement of the unnatural maxim of clerical seminaries, 'pas d'amitiés particulières.'

At what point the attempt to realize equality ceases to be on the whole productive of a greater probability of good for each, is a practical question which experience only will enable us to decide. I merely want to point out (1) that some inequality is a condition of Well-being; (2) that there is only one sort of equality that is always practicable and always right, and that is equality of consideration, since we can always (ideally) give each individual equal consideration in making up our minds whether this or that will be on the whole for the general good; and (3) that, while it is certainly a duty to aim at a social constitution which shall bring about more actual equality of good, it must not be assumed *a priori* that such equality will always

be secured by increased equality of wealth or political power or by any other kind of external equality whatever. The principle of equal consideration certainly requires us to aim at greater equality of actual Well-being, but only on condition that the greater equality will not violate the equal right of each to enjoy as much good as it is possible for him to enjoy.

So far I have been able to contend that obvious objections to the principle of equality properly understood do not really form an objection to the principle of equal consideration—to the doctrine that each man is entitled to an equal consideration at the hands of the community; though the result of such equal consideration, under given conditions, may be an exceedingly unequal distribution of actual goods. But now I have to meet a difficulty which is less easy of even theoretical solution.

III

It has already been indicated incidentally that it is not only the less than normal capacity, but also the more than normal capacity of exceptional persons, that may impose upon the community unequal sacrifices to enable them to attain an equal level of Well-being. Let us look at the difficulty in its least serious form. The number of persons capable of the highest intellectual cultivation and of enjoying the good incidental to such high cultivation is unquestionably a small minority. If such goods are to be enjoyed at all, they can only be enjoyed by the few; and yet to give these few the opportunity of such cultivation imposes upon the community sacrifices of inferior good (such good as can be enjoyed by all) quite out of proportion to the number of those for whom the sacrifice is made. It may be contended, of course, that the extra value of the services of such persons to the community is well worth the social cost involved in their long years of unproductive education or preparation, the number of persons and (it may be) the expenditure of material employed in giving that education, the waste which (on any conceivable system of selection) will be incurred by the education of persons who eventually turn out to be unfitted for the highest work, and so on. So long as that is the case, we do no doubt escape the difficulty by our formula of

equal consideration. These favoured persons may be allowed advantages which the many do not enjoy; but it is good for each member of the community that they should enjoy them. Once again, equality of consideration itself demands a departure from concrete equality. In this way our difficulty is fairly met, so long as we confine our attention to such higher kinds of culture and resulting Well-being as are of obvious social utility. But when we come to what (though the word has somewhat priggish associations) must, I suppose, be called 'the higher culture,' the case is different. It is greatly to be feared that the cost of higher culture to the community must always be considerable. It may be doubted whether there is not a kind of culture which demands for its vitality the existence of a class invested with something more than an equal share of all that makes life pleasant and attractive, that relieves from sordid cares and gives room for the free expansion of individuality—a class with a good deal of leisure (at least in youth), a good deal of freedom, an education of the kind that can only be kept alive as an hereditary tradition [1]. But of course such a class can only be maintained by enormous waste. The leisure will be wasted in a large proportion of cases; the liberty will be abused; the freedom to do with one's life what one pleases without justifying it to the rest of the community, will, in a majority of cases, be used to do with one's life what cannot be justified. Only a small proportion of these favoured individuals will do enough fully to justify their superior advantages. It may be said, indeed, that a socialistic or communistic community might devise means for keeping alive such a class if its social value be adequate to the

[1] This view is unaffected by the fact that, where this class exists, individual members of it (often the highest intellects) may come from the classes outside it. They enter into and appropriate the tradition which is kept alive by the favoured families. And it is, of course, superfluous to remark that by the favoured class I do not merely or primarily mean what is called in the conventional sense the Aristocracy or the Plutocracy (neither of which, as a class, cares much for 'higher culture' or contributes much to it), but a class enjoying as an hereditary possession a more than average measure of wealth or opportunity, and the existence of which is often no doubt more or less dependent upon the richest class either by being recruited from it or by supplying its needs.

cost it involves. But, granting for the present this social value, what is the probability of a whole community, organized on principles of pure equality and accustomed to exact in all departments implicit obedience to its collective will, recognizing the value of such culture[1]? That, of course, is a practical question which does not necessarily touch our theory. If such a community would not recognize the value of a class which is essential to the highest social Well-being, then to that extent all attempts at greater equality of social conditions should stop at the point at which the existence of this class begins to be endangered, on the principle of equal consideration itself. But all this is assuming the social value of the class. And yet may there not be a point at which the benefits of 'culture' cease to be capable of very wide diffusion? Is it possible to prove, either *a priori* or *a posteriori*, that there may not be a final irreconcilability between the higher Well-being of the few and the lower Well-being of the many[2]?

Many will be disposed to brush aside the objection somewhat contemptuously. They will be disposed to say, 'Yes, there is a certain exquisite polish of life which probably is not capable of wide diffusion, which demands the existence of a few favoured families with estates, and dividends, and large houses. It is possible that, if an omnipotent Social Democracy were established to-morrow, it would seriously diminish the present expenditure upon professors and libraries in the German Empire. There would be less "research" on matters but remotely connected with life. Fewer monographs would be published. Emendations would not flourish. Latin verse-making would lose the high market value which it still commands in this country. There would even be

[1] I need hardly say that many things which are now impossible might become possible with the gradual education of the community.

[2] I mean merely that something must be taken off from the lower Well-being of the many, not that the condition of the many must be made an absolutely undesirable one. It might be, of course, contended that it was actually good that men of lower capacities should enjoy less than the largest possible amount of the lower goods (eating, drinking, &c.). On this view the difficulty will disappear, but this position postulates that all who are capable of it have the opportunity of entering the favoured class. And this is just what no artificial arrangement seems capable of securing.

a general lowering of the standard of Greek and Latin scholarship. Those who would still study Greek and Latin would have to be content with knowing those languages, say, rather better than even learned men are now content to know French and German. And there would be fewer people to take an interest in Aldine editions or old china. But all this is of very little weight—of very little weight even for the serious intellectual interests of humanity at large. To urge such matters as a grave objection to any policy which would bring us even a step nearer the social millennium, is like justifying Egyptian bondage, because without it, in all probability, the modern globe-trotter would have had to eliminate the Pyramids from his programme.'

Personally, I should have a good deal of sympathy with such a reply, though I might feel less confident than our sanguine Socialist that the vulgarizing rust, which might be the price of a real advance towards social equality, would stop at the mere polished surface of our intellectual life. But so far we are contemplating comparatively trifling differences of intellectual level—say the difference between the intellectual level of Berlin and that of a South American University. Let us now suppose it were possible by some scheme of social reconstruction to win for the great mass of European society the social and economic conditions which may be attained by some communistic brotherhood in the United States, but at the cost of extinguishing all Science, all Literature, all Art, all intellectual activity which rises above the highest level known in such communities. That might possibly represent, even on the intellectual side taken by itself, a higher kind of life than is now lived by the vast majority even of European humanity. The extinction of the 'higher culture' could not, therefore, be resisted on the ground of the diffused influence upon the community of the small cultivated class. If asked whether we should as a fact resist such a social revolution as I have contemplated in the interests of the higher culture, many of us would be disposed to answer, 'If the programme included the bringing of human society at large up to the moral level of a Moravian mission settlement, opposition to it would be hard to justify.' If we confine our attention

merely to the general diffusion of a low material comfort, a dull contentment, and an education ranging between that of the Sunday School and that of the Mechanics' Institute, we might well be in great doubt and perplexity. I for one should certainly doubt whether, if I had the power, I could doom the world to a continuance of our present social horrors, although their removal might lead to the evanescence of research and speculation, 'sweetness and light,' full and varied exercises of the faculties, and all the rest of it. Of course I do not assert for one moment that such an alternative is now, or ever will be, in its naked simplicity, presented to the social reformer. In the long run (putting aside the influence of exceptional outbursts of religious excitement) it is probable that moral and intellectual progress are intimately connected. In the long run the diffusion of some culture among the many is only obtainable by the maintenance of a much higher culture among the few. But after all it is easy enough to conceive circumstances in which we might have to choose between the wide diffusion of a lower kind of Well-being and a much narrower diffusion of a higher kind of life. In the intellectual sphere, at all events, there is a higher life which, if it exists at all, can only exist for the comparatively few; and, in certain circumstances, it is at least a speculative possibility that the existence of such a life for the few should only be purchasable by sacrifices on the part of the many which are not compensated by any appreciable advantage to that many. If under such conditions we pronounce that the higher life ought not to be extinguished, then we do at least depart from the principle of equal consideration, understood as we have hitherto understood it.

In the cases already contemplated, some will perhaps doubt whether the principle should be sacrificed or not. I will now mention a case in which probably no one will hesitate. It is becoming tolerably obvious at the present day that all improvement in the social condition of the higher races of mankind postulates the exclusion of competition with the lower races. That means that, sooner or later, the lower Well-being—it may be ultimately the very existence—of countless Chinamen or negroes must be sacrificed that a higher life may be possible

for a much smaller number of white men[1]. It is impossible to defend the morality of such a policy upon the principle of equal consideration taken by itself and in the most obvious sense of the words. If we do defend it, we distinctly adopt the principle that higher life is intrinsically, in and for itself, more valuable than lower life, though it may only be attainable by fewer persons, and may not contribute to the greater good of those who do not share it.

I will add a case which calls still more indisputably for the application of the same principle. When we say, 'Every one to count for one,' we are no doubt thinking merely of human beings; but why are the lower animals to be excluded from consideration? I should be prepared to say that in point of fact they ought not to be wholly ignored. Their pain is certainly an evil, possibly as great an evil, as *equal* pain in human beings apart from the question of the activities with which the pain may interfere: their comfort or pleasure has a value to which every humane person will make *some* sacrifices. But few people would be disposed to spend money in bringing the lives of fairly-kept London cab-horses up to the standard of comfort represented by a sleek brewer's dray-horse in preference to spending it on the improvement of the higher life in human beings. The lives of animals cannot be thus lightly treated except upon a principle which involves the admission that the life of one sentient being may be more valuable than the life of another, on account of its greater potentialities—apart altogether from the social utilities which may be involved in their realization. However inconsiderable the differences of capacity among human races or individuals may be when compared with the differences between the lowest man and the highest beast, the distinction that we make between them implies the principle that capacity does matter. The claim of the individual does after all depend upon his capacity for an intrinsically valuable kind of life; we cannot talk of the value of an 'individual' apart altogether from the question what sort of individual it is, and only the Hedonist will seek to judge of

[1] The exclusion is far more difficult to justify in the case of people like the Japanese, who are equally civilized but have fewer wants than the Western.

that value solely by the individual's capacity for pleasure. No positive proof can, as it appears to me, be given that the higher good of few and the lower good of many may not come into collision. And when they do come into collision, there are some cases in which we should, I think, prefer the higher good of the few.

How far then does this admission modify our acceptance of the Benthamite principle of equal consideration? Only to this extent—that, if we still adhere to the formula 'every one to count for one and nobody for more than one,' we must reduce it to a still more abstract form. We may still say that every one is to count for one so long as all we know about him is that he is one[1]. We may still say, '*Caeteris paribus*, every one is to count for one.' But then, this will only amount to the assertion, 'Every one is to count equally, so long as he is equal; but the capacity for a higher life may be a ground for treating men unequally.' Or more simply we may say 'Every man's good to count as equal to the *like good* of every other man.'

While it is impossible to show that the claims of the few possessing higher capacities for good will never come into collision with the claims of the many to such good as they are capable of, there are some considerations which will, I think, very largely prevent the necessity of choosing between the rival claims in practical life. While we cannot theoretically demonstrate that the best sort of life (in the intellectual region) will always diffuse its benefits over the whole social organism, we may in general find an ample justification for promoting the higher culture of the few in the *ultimate* results of such higher culture to the community generally. The principle of Election has a place in Ethics and Politics as well as in Theology. It is often right for governments and for individuals to bestow much more than their fair share of attention upon the few on account of the ultimate value to society of there being such a higher class. We are, in fact, applying once more the principle that, in the equal distribution of good, future generations have their

[1] Or, as it is well put by von Hartmann, 'If Equity demands a distribution, without respect of persons, that means only: all peculiarities of the person which are irrelevant (*unwesentlich*) for the purpose of the distribution must be put aside' (*Das sittl. Bewusstsein*, p. 438).

share as well as the present. It is sometimes suggested that, in the then condition of the world, Athenian culture and Athenian democracy were impossible without slavery [1]. It would perhaps be hard to show that the actual slaves of the time were much better off for the intellectual and the political life in which they had no share; but it would not be too much to say that in the forces which have ultimately banished slavery from Europe and America, in the forces to which the modern democratic movement owes its existence, that Hellenic city-life of which slavery was the foundation is no unimportant factor. In so far as that was so, slavery might claim a temporary and relative justification. On the same principle, we might justify our comparative indifference to the welfare of the black races, when it collides with the higher Well-being of a much smaller European population, by the consideration that if the higher life is ever to become possible on any large scale for black men it can only be through the maintenance and progress of a higher race. Still more are such considerations applicable to the maintenance of a culture or a civilization within a community from the benefit of which large classes within it are at present excluded, though of course the effort to extend the class that benefits by it should go hand in hand with the effort that maintains and improves the culture of the few. Such considerations will, it may be, practically prevent the necessity of our actually claiming for a smaller class any social expenditure (so to speak) but what can ultimately be repaid to the society (though not always to the actual persons) which makes that Well-being possible. Since, however, the repayment is made to future generations, it supplies no ground for assuming that a communistic or ultra-socialistic community would be sure to recognize the importance of such an expenditure.

It may be well, perhaps, to summarize the conclusions which I have endeavoured to establish.

(1) It is a self-evident truth that in the distribution of ultimate good every one should count for one, and nobody for more than

[1] That Aristotle would have thought so there can be no doubt. But it should not be assumed that had men arisen capable of appreciating the essential injustice and the economic defects of slavery, Greek civilization and Greek culture would have been the worse for an Abolitionist campaign.

one, so long as all that we know about the persons in question is that they are individual members of human society. This is the ideal of Justice.

(2) The equal distribution of concrete good things would often produce unequal amounts of actual Well-being, and would therefore be inconsistent with the principle of equal consideration. Strict equality of opportunity equally fails to satisfy the requirements of ideal Justice.

(3) The equal distribution even of actual Well-being would often produce a low total amount of good to be distributed, and would consequently violate the equal right of each to have as large a share of good as it is possible for him to have consistently with respect for the like right in others. Practically this consideration must involve much inequality in actual distribution. The only equality that it is reasonable to aim at is equality of consideration.

(4) All men are not capable of the same kind or amount of good. While the enjoyment by some of such good as, from the nature of the case, cannot be enjoyed by all is usually for the good of all, and hence justified by the principle of equal consideration, it is impossible to show that this will be invariably the case. Individuals, or races, with higher capacities (i. e. capacities for a higher sort of Well-being) have a right to more than merely equal consideration as compared with those of lower capacities. Hence the formula, 'Every one to count for one, nobody for more than one,' must be interpreted to mean 'every one's good to count for as much as the like good of any one else.'

(5) In practice it may, however, usually be assumed that the realization of such superior capacities by those who possess them is for the ultimate good of the human race.

We have, so far, left out of account altogether all strictly moral differences between man and man. We have left out of account the question whether the share of good to be allotted to each man, or rather (as we have seen) his share of consideration in the distribution of good, ought ever to be more than another's on account either (from one point of view) of his greater contribution to the common good, or (from another) his greater virtue or merit. An answer to this question will

practically amount to a discussion of the second of the formulae which purport to be an adequate expression of social justice—the formula, 'To every one according to his merits,' the theory of just recompense or reward.

IV

I shall now proceed to examine this second formula which, on the face of it, presents itself to many people as self-evidently just and reasonable—the theory of reward or just recompense. This doctrine is apt to express itself in two forms. Sometimes it is said that every one ought to be rewarded in proportion to his merit; at other times we are told that every one should be rewarded according to the amount of his work or service to society. Sometimes the maxim is 'to every man according to his merit'; at other times 'to every man according to his work[1].'

Although, on a superficial view, these two formulae might be accepted as practically identical, there is really a fundamental difference between them. We may no doubt reduce both of them to the form 'everybody is to be rewarded according to his merit.' But in the first case merit is understood in a moral, in the second in an economic, sense. A moment's consideration will show that the two interpretations would lead to essentially different results. A picture painted with the toes by a handless man may show much more zeal, industry, perseverance, and the like, as well as more skill and ability, than one painted in the usual way. If the two pictures were of equal artistic worth, the painters ought, according to the second formula, to be rewarded equally; while, according to the first, the toe-painter should receive, it may be, ten or twenty times the reward of the hand-painter. And this is by no means an extreme

[1] I am here treating the formula in the sense in which it is usually put forward—as a rule for the actual distribution of concrete goods. If it is put forward as a formula for the distribution of actual Well-being, its application would have to be further modified by the principle which has been already dwelt upon in connexion with the formula of equal consideration—the principle that an equal wage will not secure equal Well-being.

illustration of the divergent consequences of the two methods: for it is not easy to exaggerate the difference between the maximum and the minimum of human talent, skill, strength, or other capacities which determine the quantity and value of the results produced by a given amount of labour. Let us, then, examine the economic interpretation of our thesis first.

The theory that ideal Justice means paying each man in proportion to the value of his work to the community looks plausible only so long as we forget that economic value is essentially relative, and not absolute. What we mean by the value of a given thing is the amount of other things which will actually be given for it under certain social conditions. But, when we are assuming that the very constitution of society has been, so to speak, put into the melting-pot—when we are given carte blanche to reconstruct human society in accordance with ideal Justice, all the usual means of ascertaining value disappear. Our ordinary ideas of value postulate that wealth is divided among a number of individuals who, under whatever restrictions, are free to barter one form of it for another. The value—let us say—of medical attendance depends upon the amount of other good things which people are prepared to give up in exchange for medical attendance, under such conditions as the following: (1) that the numbers of the medical profession depend upon the number of persons who are induced to enter it by the advantages which it holds out, as compared with other professions open to the same class of persons; (2) that the profession requires a certain expenditure upon education; and (3) that this expenditure is only within the reach of a limited number of persons who have—themselves or their parents—accumulated a certain amount of wealth, and become, to a limited extent, capitalists; and so on. I need not take further pains to show that values, no less than prices, are fixed by competition[1]. The

[1] All the conceptions employed by Economists, such as 'marginal utility,' 'marginal demand,' 'consumer's rent,' and the like, seem to be in the same case. It may be observed that even if some means could be discovered, in the absence of competition, for measuring the extent to which different commodities could satisfy the actual desires of men, this would be no criterion of their true ethical value for those who hold that good does not mean what men actually desire. The ethical disquisitions of some Economists

very instance which I have chosen is, indeed, one of those in which prices are not *wholly* fixed by competition; and, just at the point at which they cease to be fixed by competition (between different classes of workers, if not between individual workmen), we cease to be able to express the value of the article supplied. It is customary with general practitioners to regulate their fees by the wealth of the patient, of which the probable rental of his house is taken as a rough indication. Now, if patient *A* pays 10*s.*, patient *B* pays 7*s.* 6*d.*, and patient *C* 5*s.*, for a precisely similar visit, which fee represents the true value of the commodity supplied? This is a question which it is obviously impossible to answer. Now, in a community organized throughout upon a non-competitive basis, it would be as impossible to express in general terms the value of medical attendance as compared with other things that have value, as it is to express the true value of those particular visits which are remunerated according to the wealth of the patient. Value is ascertained by competition. It implies that there is a limited supply of the commodities in question, or at least a limited supply of commodities in general, and that if you have one, you can't have another. Now, medical attendance is precisely a commodity for which there is a by no means unlimited demand. A socialistic State which should determine the vocation of all its members, and provide their whole education, might very conceivably secure medical attendance free for all its citizens. If everybody could have as much medical attendance as he required without giving up his share of any other commodity, it would be clearly impossible to ascertain the economic value of medical attendance to the community.

It may be said that these considerations would cease to be applicable when we think not of the demand for this or that commodity (which is always limited) but of the demand for commodities in general which is practically unlimited. The

(even when they repudiate the hedonistic Psychology) seem to me to be seriously vitiated by the assumption that such is the case. One of the great objections to schemes for the immediate realization of the socialistic ideal is that they would certainly involve an attempt to fix remuneration (including hours of work) by reference to the wants at present felt, and the ideal of 'happiness' at present entertained, by the average worker.

case would not, indeed, be altered supposing the State undertook to determine how much of each commodity the worker should receive, and exchange were made as criminal as accumulation. But what if the worker were paid by tickets on the stores, and each worker were allowed to take his day's allowance in whatever form he pleased? Two cases are then supposable. The State would have to fix the amount of one commodity which should be exchangeable for another. If it undertook to estimate the value of the article by reference to the amount of skill, knowledge, training, &c., which it took to produce it, we must suppose the problem which we are discussing already solved; since what we are in search of is precisely some common denominator by means of which to compare the value of watch-making and the value of turnip-cultivation. If, on the other hand (to avoid involving ourselves in a logical circle), we assume that the *quality* of the labour is to be neglected, the only criteria by which it is possible to ascertain how much of one commodity ought to be served out as the equivalent of so much of another will be (1) the amount of labour expended on its production, (2) the amount of land or its products and capital required for its production, capital being resolvable into the results of past labour, and of the 'abstinence' or waiting which has saved it from immediate consumption[1]. On the principle now contemplated, the worker who was allowed to take his pay in beef or in bread would, of course, have to choose between several pounds of bread and one of beef, because it takes more land to grow a pound of ox-flesh than to grow a pound of flour. But this element in the relative value of different commodities has, of course, nothing to do with the value of the workman's work *qua* work[2]. Hence, the only

[1] It seems unnecessary for our present purpose to discuss the economic question how far land should be regarded as capital.

[2] It may be urged that the worker whose work has involved expenditure of capital, i.e. 'abstinence' or 'waiting,' should be remunerated for that expenditure. But under such an ideal system as is here contemplated the work which produced the capital would have been adequately rewarded at the time; and, when we presuppose an ideal distribution, there would be no occasion for capital to be accumulated by the voluntary saving of individuals, as the State would have provided all that was required out of the

way in which we can compare the value of two pieces of work (on any hypothesis) is by their respective amounts.

Even then our difficulties are not at an end. What is *amount* of work? Clearly not the time spent on it; for some kinds of work are harder than others. But hardness is not by itself a reason for additional remuneration, except in so far as harder work is more disagreeable than lighter work. Some very light kinds of work may become disagreeable by reason of their extreme monotony; while severe bodily exercise is to some people a positive delight. Hard work may likewise become disagreeable when pursued for such a length of time as would not be disagreeable in the case of lighter work. But all that the hard-worker can claim is that, in so far as his work is more disagreeable than other work, he shall be compensated for its disagreeableness, either by liberty to work for fewer hours, or by other advantages—such as more food, tickets on stores, &c. It is possible that some system might be devised for comparing the relative disagreeableness of work by ascertaining the amounts of each which the average man would be willing to do for the same remuneration, including under that term all the advantages —whether in leisure or food or other conveniences—by which a community might endeavour to equalize the conditions of workers in different occupations. In that way it might be possible to ascertain the quantity of work which different commodities or services to the community cost. And quantity of labour, in the sense explained, is the only criterion by which we could measure the relative value of different kinds of work.

Although this reasoning seems to me to be unanswerable, it is probable that to some minds it will be found too abstract to be satisfying. 'What!' they will exclaim; 'do you mean to say that the Physician does not perform a greater service to society than the ploughman? Is he not therefore to receive a proportionate reward? Granted that the destruction of competition would prevent your measuring this relative value in terms of £ *s. d.*, the general sense of the community is surely equal to the task of appreciating the relative importance of different

common funds. In speaking of 'capital' throughout this chapter I of course mean 'productive' and not 'consumptive' capital.

services, and will act according to its innate sense of what is just or appropriate.' I answer: Is it so clear that the service of the Physician is so much more important than that of the ploughman? At present we measure their relative importance by the comparative difficulty of getting them. But with carte blanche to postulate any form of society that he chooses, the legislator would have no difficulty in making it quite as easy to get medical attendance as to get bread. A sufficient number of people will be educated as Physicians to secure that medical attendance shall be forthcoming for every man who wants it, and sufficient ploughmen will be provided to supply everybody with as much bread as he can eat. And, when these two conditions are secured, no further production either of bread or of medical attendance will be of the slightest value to the community [1]. If you can have enough of both, it is impossible to say which is the more valuable. If you ask which is the more valuable when you cannot have enough of both, it must be admitted that the ploughman performs the more indispensable service. Some of us would die or suffer without the Physician: but we should all die without the ploughman or some equivalent food-producer. If, then, this is the sense which you put upon the principle 'To every man according to his work,' it would seem that the ploughman should be paid more than the Physician. But it is impossible to admit the justice of the principle thus interpreted. The Physician would naturally say to the State, 'If I had known that I was to be served like that, I should have wanted to be a ploughman too. And if you, for your greater convenience, insisted that I should be a Physician, why should I suffer on that account? You say, "Bread is more necessary than medical attendance"; but if you did not want to have both, you should not have insisted on my being a Physician.'

It is evident that the real consequences of following out this maxim, 'Every man according to his work,' would be very different from those usually intended by at least one class of its advocates. When they do not mean that equal work should

[1] Foreign trade being, for greater simplicity, ignored. If corn is exported, it is, of course, not serviceable to the community *as bread*.

be recompensed by equal advantages, they usually assume that what is commonly considered the higher work, that which employs the highest faculties, intellectual work, artistic work, spiritual work, &c., should be remunerated more highly than the lower, more mechanical, more animal work. Now, this contention may be based on one of two grounds: either (1) on the ground that by such work a higher service is performed to the community, or (2) that the higher faculty should receive higher remuneration simply because it is higher. In the first case, I am unable to see the justice of the demand. The man who prints Bibles no doubt renders a higher service to the community than the man who prints 'penny dreadfuls.' But, assuming that both minister to legitimate social needs, nobody would propose that the former should receive higher remuneration than the latter. So long as the different values spring from some difference in the mere objective results of work, nobody will contend that the more important or 'higher' consequences should form a ground for unequal reward of exactly the same work. If you say, 'The work itself is different, not merely its external consequences,' I cannot see how there can be a difference in kind between one work and another when abstracted both (1) from the results to the community and (2) from the faculties employed by the worker. If you mean to insist upon the last, then you adopt the second of our two original alternatives, which we have yet to examine.

Is the superior dignity—the moral or aesthetic or intellectual superiority—of the activities employed any ground for additional remuneration? Of course, if intellectual work is considered more disagreeable than unintellectual, then the work ought to receive compensating advantages. But it is not the common opinion that *to intellectual persons* intellectual work is less agreeable than manual labour or mechanical drudgery. Most people would probably say, '*Caeteris paribus*, the intellectual work is infinitely the more pleasant.' Even if we suppose the social estimation and other conditions of intellectual and manual labour equalized, there would probably be more persons anxious to undertake intellectual instead of manual work than the community could provide with adequate employment. For our

present purpose, however, it is enough to negative any claim for additional remuneration on the ground of additional disagreeableness. If, however, the intellectual work is supposed to imply a sort of *merit* on the part of the worker, and to claim remuneration on that score, one must ask, 'To what does the intellectual worker owe the opportunity of doing this higher work?' The answer will be, (1) partly to superior education and opportunities, (2) partly, in the case of the higher kinds of intellectual work, to the possession of natural capacities which are confined to a more or less small proportion of the human race. Now, in so far as the position of the brain-worker is due to education, it is clearly not his merit but the organization of society which has put him in this position. Under present conditions, it is generally the command of capital that secures education; and, the capital expended upon education being nearly always accumulated by others than the person whom it benefits, it will hardly be pretended that an accident of this kind can claim remuneration on grounds of abstract Justice, however expedient it may be as a means to the general good under certain conditions that such remuneration should be given. And under altered social arrangements the community could, of course, easily secure that the requisite educational advantages should be given to as many persons as its social needs might demand. In either case, there is no question of superior merit in the intellectual worker.

But how does the matter stand with regard to those capacities for higher work which are due to Nature? Nature has given to many Englishmen intellectual powers possessed by very few negroes. Among Englishmen she has made, perhaps, from two to five per cent. capable[1], with the requisite education, opportunity and application, of obtaining a first-class in *literae humaniores* at Oxford—to take the distribution of one particular kind of intellectual capacity as a sample of the comparative rarity of high intellectual powers. And when we come to the highest kind of intellectual capacity, she gives high originality to one man in a thousand, genius to half a dozen in a generation, and so on. But should the possession of capacities for

[1] I need hardly say that this estimate is little better than guesswork.

doing the precise kind of work which only a certain number of his fellow countrymen can do—should even the power to do (a power which is implied, of course, by even the most modest kind of *originality*) the particular thing which no one else living can do, constitute ground for superior remuneration? So long as the question is considered merely as one of 'reward'—of some additional gratification, not implying or essential to the exercise of his superior faculty—I must say that I cannot see the justice of this extra remuneration. Everybody would admit that the mere rarity of a capacity would be no ground for exceptional treatment; though, of course, the most mechanical and accidental kind of superiority (e. g. delicacy of touch enabling a man to test grain better than anybody else) may, under a competitive régime, enable a man to appropriate an enormous share of the world's wealth. Under a competitive régime giants and dwarfs can make considerable money by exhibiting themselves; but on principles of ideal Justice is there any reason why they should be paid more for their day's labour than an ordinary sandwich-man? Is the case altered when the qualification is not merely rare but intellectually or artistically or even (in so far as moral qualities are not under the immediate control of the will) morally admirable? Should strength of brain or steadiness of nerve or a natural love of work entitle a man to a superior share of the good things of life, any more than strength of arm? If a man has a body of extraordinary size or strength, it is right that I should look upon him—not, indeed, with the feeling of awe or respect which is often in fact inspired by the knowledge that in certain circumstances such a man might assault us with impunity, but with the feelings of wonder and interest which are inspired by an elephant or a fossil mammoth. If he has extraordinary skill and agility of body, it is fitting that I should look upon him with the half-aesthetic, half-sympathetic feeling that is inspired by the sight of a gazelle or a greyhound. If he has exceptional brain-power, the imagination of a poet or the penetration of a philosopher, it is right that I should treat him with respect, i. e. the intellectual respect that his qualities merit. If he has moral or spiritual capacities above those of common men, then it is right that I should treat him

with moral and spiritual respect. But I see no reason why, on account of either the intellectual or the spiritual superiority, I should offer him a bottle of champagne while for my less gifted guest I only provide small beer. Neither intellectual nor spiritual superiority seems to constitute an intelligible ground for assigning to a man a larger share of carnal delights than his neighbour. The opportunity of freely exercising his superior faculty and the power or authority which his particular gift fits him to wield, these strike us as the fitting rewards, and the only fitting rewards, for superiority of this kind. To the man who is capable of a higher kind of happiness than others because of his higher gifts, that higher happiness itself surely is the due reward—not a larger meed than others of those lower kinds of pleasure of which alone his inferior may be capable. If any difference were to be made between the two, it might be plausibly argued that the superior man should receive less of those lower pleasures which he ought better to be able to do without, than the man who is capable of nothing else. Of course it may be suggested that the superior man may be expected to 'make a good use' of his superior wealth, i. e. to use it in the public interest. But if so, the wealth is not really 'distributed,' the distribution is merely postponed. The real problem is, 'what is it just that the superior man should *enjoy*?'

To translate this somewhat abstract language into terms of actual social arrangements, Justice does not seem to me to require that because Nature has given a man capacities which fit him for superior usefulness to the community, his work per hour should—on any abstract principle and apart from considerations of social utility—be paid at a higher rate than the equally exhausting or disagreeable work of common men [1]. When I say 'paid at a higher rate,' I mean that there is no reason why he should be better fed, clothed, or housed;

[1] The fatigue of work demands remuneration only in so far as it (1) makes it disagreeable, which it does not always do, or (2) makes the worker capable of doing less of it. If, on account of the value of his work, it is socially desirable that he should do a longer day's work than others, then no doubt the absence of recreation should be made up to him in other ways.

that he should be indulged in more or more expensive amusements, or allowed longer holidays.

No doubt it is quite true that the man of higher faculty requires for the exercise of those faculties certain external conditions of an exceptional character. And some of these conditions may consist in a larger supply of those conveniences and indulgences which ordinary men are quite capable of appreciating. Nay, the higher faculty may sometimes be a source, not of greater happiness, but of greater misery, unless these conditions are forthcoming. The musical genius, for instance, might be driven distracted by being compelled to live amid the noise and bustle, the barrel-organs and the hurdy-gurdies, which would be Paradise to many an East-end factory-girl. And of intellectual workers in general it may be said that they do require for the favourable exercise of their faculties a larger share of certain comforts and conveniences than would be likely to fall to the lot of the average workman under a régime of absolute equality. It is doubtful whether the luxurious table of a successful barrister is any more conducive to his activity than the humbler fare of the solicitor's managing clerk, who may sometimes do quite as large an allowance of brain-work; but it is probably true that the brain-worker wants more and better food than is absolutely necessary for the less exhausting kinds of mechanical work. Still, if everybody had his fill of plain and wholesome diet, I don't know that the brain-worker could on grounds of abstract Justice claim anything more[1]. Nor is there any reason in the nature of things—existing social conventionalities apart—why the brain-worker should be clad in broad-cloth, and the hand-worker in corduroy. But it is otherwise when we come to less material conveniences. It is probably desirable in the interests of his efficiency that the higher-class brain-worker should be set free from petty worries and anxieties. Under existing conditions, that would mean that he ought to be allowed servants to do for him things which other people have to do for themselves; under any arrange-

[1] It is possible no doubt that a certain amount of luxury, even in matters of eating and drinking, may sometimes be conducive to efficiency, but, if the luxuries were given on this ground, they would not be given by way of 'reward.'

ments he would want a larger amount of *service*. It is desirable that he should have more house-room than the most ideal Socialism would probably assign to ordinary hand-workers. The doctor's carriage is none the less a personal luxury because it is also necessary to his business. The author will want a study, the artist a studio, the student books and room to stow them. If his wife is to be capable of sharing his life, and not to be a mere housekeeper, she must also be secured more than the normal exemption from household drudgery by nurses and other servants. And if family life is to be maintained, it is practically inevitable that some of these advantages should be extended to his children, who may nevertheless be very far from inheriting his mental superiority. Then, too, it is probable that, if the lives of highly cultivated people are to be made as agreeable to them as *their* lives are to people of less cultivation, they will want amusements or interests that will impose upon the community a heavier tax than the amusements of the less cultivated. We can hardly conceive of the most absolutely socialistic State allowing very extensive opportunities of foreign travel to every one; and yet it is clearly desirable that they should be within the reach of some. Moreover, for the exercise of certain mental gifts, considerable leisure and some liberty of action may be essential—including the liberty at times to be unproductive. Literary production of a certain kind has, indeed, often been stimulated by the most abject bodily want; but it is certain that the higher kinds of intellectual labour could never be made into a daily task, to be exacted under penalty of imprisonment or short commons by a socialistic taskmaster. In ways like these it is probably right that the more gifted man—or even the more educated man when once the community has allowed him a higher education than the common—should have exceptional treatment. But it is rather because these things are necessary or desirable for the full development and enjoyment of a faculty which ought to be developed, than as 'reward' for being differently constituted from ordinary men, that he may rightfully claim from the community the use—in certain directions—of more wealth than would fall to his lot under a perfectly equal distribution.

Our examination of the dictum, 'To every man according to his work,' has, so far, tended to this result—that we can accept it only in the sense, 'The development of higher capacity is of more worth than the development of lower capacity, and consequently ought to be provided with all the conditions necessary to its exercise.' And this was, it will be remembered, the one reservation which our examination of the other maxim, 'Everybody to count for one, and nobody for more than one,' compelled us to adopt before we could admit its universal applicability in any sense other than the purely abstract one, '*Caeteris paribus*, everybody to count for one,' or 'One man's good to count for as much as the like good of any other if all we know about him is that he is a man.' We came to the conclusion that the higher good was worth more than the lower, and that consequently the man who has more capacity for higher good should count for more than the man who has less.

So far, however, we have confined our attention to those differences in capacity for work which are due solely to differences of natural endowment. But now, what of the differences which are due to will? What of the strictly moral differences? Ought the virtuous to be rewarded? What, in ultimate analysis, are we to make of the popular notion of 'merit'? Here it is necessary to put aside two philosophical problems with which a discussion of this question is usually involved.

(1) I put aside for the present the question of Free-will. The facts of heredity, the phenomena of mental pathology, and the constancy of statistics make it plain that Free-will (in the popular 'indeterminist' sense of the word) is on any view not the *only* cause of some men's goodness and other men's badness. And it is obviously impossible to discriminate in our treatment of other people between the part which undetermined choice (if such a thing there be) may play in the formation of actual good volitions, and the factors in their causation which are due to other influences. Hence it is clear that, if we are in any sense to reward men for their goodness, we must look only to the actual quality of their volitions. We must reward them for being good without raising the question how they came to be so.

(2) The question involves an answer to the theory of punish-

ment. If punishment is retrospective and retributive, then it may be inferred that reward must also rest upon an *a priori* basis, and not be a means to anything beyond itself. That is a question which I reserve for separate treatment in the next chapter: but, even if we deny that the bad man ought to suffer pain as an end-in-itself, independently of the moral effect to be produced upon him and others, it does not follow that we must, on that account, decline to say that happiness ought to be distributed in proportion to goodness. It is one thing to cause a man pain, another to refuse to make him happier than somebody else. When it is a question of inflicting pain, the *onus probandi*, so to speak, would seem to rest with the inflicter; when it is a question of distributing happiness, it may be considered to lie with the claimants. If I hang, or assault, or imprison a man, he naturally demands my authority for doing so; but it might easily be maintained that I do no wrong to *A* by giving a certain lot of happiness to *B*. The question is, therefore, not settled by the view we take of the theory of punishment, unless, indeed, we look upon punishment in a merely negative aspect as the withholding of some good[1]. We must therefore still ask, 'Is it reasonable that an individual or a community, having the conditions of happiness or Well-being[2] at his or its disposal, should distribute them to all equally, or should distribute them in proportion to the moral worth of the individuals concerned?'

To this question the obvious practical answer will be that we shall distribute in accordance with merit because we want to make as many people good as possible, and that experience shows that the best way of effecting that object is to contrive that, so far as possible, goodness shall lead to happiness, and badness to misery[3]. The question whether, apart from such tendency,

[1] See below, p. 294 *note*.

[2] The idea of distribution according to merit is generally understood to refer to the distribution of happiness, since the higher elements of Well-being constitute the merit which is to be rewarded, and cannot therefore be themselves distributed by way of reward.

[3] If we hold (with Aristotle) that Virtue necessarily or intrinsically leads to happiness (given the favourable external conditions or an 'unimpeded exercise' of virtuous activities), the question ceases to have any meaning except

Justice would require an unequal distribution of external goods is an extremely abstract question which it can never be necessary to answer for the solution of any practical problem. But, if the question must be answered, I should be disposed to say: If the matter be treated as an abstract question of merit and reward, I can see no reason at all why superior moral goodness should be assigned a superior quantity of external goods, that is to say, the means of indulging desires which have no connexion with this superior goodness. So far as the word 'merit' means anything more than 'intrinsic worth' or 'value,' it must be treated as one possessing no intelligible meaning. Goodness does not merit material reward, as though goodness were a loss to the possessor which can only be rationalized if he be paid for it. But if the question be asked whether the good man ought not to be made happy, I should answer, 'Yes, certainly he ought to be made happy, because the kind of happiness of which the good man is capable possesses so much higher a value than the happiness of the less virtuous character. Just because Virtue is not by itself the only good for man, though it is his highest good and an essential condition of *the* good, the man who has it should be given all that is necessary to complete his true Well-being. Pleasure taken by itself in abstraction from all other elements of consciousness may have a very small value: pleasure taken in connexion with elements of consciousness that are bad—such pleasure in a word as a bad man is capable of—may have still smaller or perhaps a negative value; but such pleasure as accompanies the exercise of the higher faculties under favourable circumstances possesses a very high value indeed.' But if this be the ground on which we pronounce that goodness should be rewarded, it is clear that it is not any and every kind, nor every amount of pleasure or material source of pleasure, that should be the ideal reward of the good man. The fitting reward of the

in relation to God, who may no doubt be conceived of as creating human nature in such a way as to make goodness constitute or contribute to the happiness of the creature. Goodness can hardly be thought to be a good at all without being supposed to be a source of happiness: the question remains whether, in so far as happiness is dependent on external circumstances, the other conditions of happiness ought to be made to follow upon goodness.

good man (if we still talk of reward at all) is the opportunity for the freest and most fruitful exercise of his highest capacities—their exercise in such a way as shall be most favourable both to the goodness itself and to the pleasure which, under favourable circumstances, goodness brings with it. It is (as Aristotle puts it) the 'appropriate' or 'cognate' pleasure that is the fitting reward of the activity, together with such other pleasures as are conducive or not unfavourable to the continued exercise of virtuous activities. And to that end the man ought clearly to be assigned not the amount of external goods which he has 'earned,' for moral goodness cannot be expressed in terms of external goods, or of such happiness as external goods can secure, but the quantity of external goods which will be most calculated to secure that ideal of life which includes goodness and culture and happiness[1]. And if it be asked what is to be done when the claims of the good man come into collision with those of less good or bad men, I answer in accordance with the principle which we have already adopted: 'the higher kind of life is worth more than the lower: consequently the man with the higher capacities[2] must be treated as of more value than the

[1] This of course represents the Aristotelian idea of the proper relation of external goods to *εὐδαιμονία*, an idea which Aristotle entirely forgets in his somewhat crude account of distributive Justice. It is perhaps a somewhat paradoxical result of our principle (one which Aristotle would have been little disposed to admit) that the less completely virtuous man might sometimes have to be assigned more material reward than the more virtuous. The average man, even the average good man, certainly does want, to make him really happy, many external goods which would not have increased the happiness of St. Francis of Assisi, or even of an ideal man of less one-sided development than St. Francis.

[2] The higher capacities, not the higher performance. Logically we should have to admit that, if the bad man could be rendered capable of the higher life by expending upon him what it would be prepared to spend upon the better man, the expenditure would be equally justified. And there are cases where that principle may really be acted on. We are justified in spending money to bring one sinner to repentance which might otherwise have been spent in adding to the comforts of ninety-and-nine just persons who need no repentance. How to compare the claims of the sinner and the just might often be a difficult problem but for the fortunate fact that the conversion of the most obviously anti-social sinners involves the saving of considerable expense to the just persons.

man of less capacity:—of how much more value is a problem which the practical Reason must solve when occasion arises for it.'

It should be observed, indeed, that the grounds on which we do, in a sense, admit the good to be entitled to reward will by themselves set a limit to the amount of this reward, in so far as it consists in the means of gratifying the lower or more animal desires. It will be generally admitted that the possession, or at least the consumption, of much wealth in such ways is not favourable to—may even be inconsistent with—the highest moral Well-being. And when the existing inequalities are justified as a means to the encouragement of 'merit,' it is often forgotten that the influence of excessive wealth upon the moral Well-being of its possessors may be as injurious as its influence in decreasing the moral and physical Well-being of the poor. If the question be raised, whether the system of rewarding Virtue is not itself injurious to Virtue, I should be quite prepared to admit that the reward of Virtue might very easily be carried to this point, though in the interests of society we often have to encourage social service even to the injury of the highest character. And this is one of the difficulties that I should feel in admitting, even as an abstract and theoretical proposition, that the good man ought, as a matter of *a priori* Justice, to be rewarded *in proportion to* his merit. For that would mean, if we use words in their ordinary sense, that every increase of Virtue should, on principles of ideal Justice, bring with it a larger house, more servants, better dinners, more expensive pleasures, more splendid equipages, and more costly horseflesh. And these things would possibly not be good for the good man. The House of Lords may be a useful institution under existing social conditions, but it can hardly be said to 'encourage' the highest Virtue in Peers or their eldest sons.

But how far is this principle, that the good ought to be rewarded, available as a canon of distributive Justice in actual life? For practical purposes hardly at all. We must, no doubt, in criticizing or seeking to alter existing social arrangements bear in mind the necessity of securing conditions favourable to the highest type of life. But in its ordinary economic arrangements the only kind of goodness which society at large has it

in its power to reward is positive contribution to social good, and for the most part such contribution to social good as admits of being not altogether inadequately expressed in terms of £ *s. d.* The only kind of reward, in short, of which it is possible to take much practical account is the economic reward for work done. For how is it possible to discriminate between the portion of the work produced which is due to superior goodwill, to industry, perseverance, integrity, and that which is due to superior capacity? It is obvious that one workman can do in an hour twice as much work as another working equally hard. But how can we test the intensity of a man's application? It is practically impossible to reward industry without rewarding cleverness also. And yet we have seen that the ideal of just reward is not satisfied by paying a man according to the actual quantity of work done irrespective of the qualities which he shows in doing it. It follows then that, if there is to be any diversity of reward at all, it cannot be based upon the principle of ideal Justice, but must be regulated by social expediency. If anybody thinks that men in general could be induced to put forth their maximum activity in the service of the community without the prospect of reward, for themselves and those nearly connected with them, he is a person with whom it is useless to argue. Rewards there must be; and yet rewards cannot be directly justified by considerations of ideal Justice, but only indirectly by their tendency to bring about in the long run equality of consideration in the distribution of good.

And lest I should be accused of taking a low view of human nature or inadequately recognizing its future improvability, let me add two practical considerations which must be borne in mind before our conclusions are used as a justification of the social *status quo*, or as an argument against any suggested modification of society in a socialistic direction. In the first place, it must be remembered that a very small reward is quite sufficient to call forth men's utmost energies when no other is obtainable. A free labourer would laugh in your face if you proposed to allure him to greater industry by the offer of an additional two ounces of bread *per diem*, but such an offer is found a very effective stimulus among the inmates of His Majesty's

gaols. German judges probably work as hard as English ones, though they do not receive such large salaries. After a certain point small incomes stimulate activity as much as larger ones when no larger ones are to be had. The other consideration is that even in the existing state of society the rewards for which men work (in so far as they do work for reward) are very largely honorary—rewards which take the form of social consideration or of interesting employment for their higher faculties. The pecuniary gains even of the most remunerative professions are small compared with those of commerce, but they are more attractive to educated men because even at the present day an eminent Physician or Lawyer enjoys more consideration and has a more interesting life than a successful clothier or brewer with a much larger income. And the Civil Service can secure the highest ability at a still lower rate. Even wealth itself is largely valued as the concrete embodiment of success and the source of social consideration. In the society of the future these principles might be carried much further. Rewards will always be necessary, but rewards may be increasingly small in their cost to the community, and increasingly non-material in character; and, though reward must always in the nature of things consist in some sort of differential advantage, the advantage may be increasingly consistent with and conducive to the highest development of the less favoured individuals. Reward must always, under any possible conditions of human life, mean the getting something which somebody else has not got: it need not always mean the gain of one at the expense of the whole. Both the lower kind of non-material rewards (stars, ribbons, titles, newspaper notoriety, conventional social position) and the higher (more responsible and more intellectual work, power, influence, interesting society, the esteem of the best) must always from the nature of the case belong to the few, but they need not involve a burden on the many. And if the enjoyment of the best things in life does involve, and always must to some extent involve, exceptional material advantages, the material side of the reward may still be treated as a condition of that better life which ideal Justice would award to the exceptionally gifted, and not as its essence.

While the principles of ideal Justice can hardly be made into a rule capable of actual application to the actual payment of each individual citizen even in a socialistic Utopia, the principle that the higher life possesses superior value has a most important bearing upon questions of social organization and social policy. It emphasizes the fact that we must not push the search for equality of conditions, or even the pursuit of maximum Well-being for all, to the point which might be fatal to progress and so extinguish the higher kinds of human existence altogether. From the point of view of reward, if that principle is to be admitted at all, it would be only moral effort that could be supposed to carry with it a title to superior remuneration: and the difficulty of distinguishing superior effort from superior ability was, we saw, insuperable. But, if we claim for higher capacity the conditions of its exercise on the ground simply of the higher worth of the life which such capacity makes possible, it will become unnecessary to draw a sharp line between moral and intellectual capacity, between superior exertion and superior success. All kinds of higher life—moral, intellectual, and aesthetic—will be treated as more valuable than lower life. In the distribution of good things—or, to speak more practically, in the criticism and modification of social institutions—each element in life should receive the weight that is due to its intrinsic quality, and not merely to its amount measured by a hedonistic or any other merely quantitative standard. Such is the ultimate meaning of that idea of distributive Justice or just recompense which protests against the Benthamite idea of equal consideration, pure and simple, and seeks to mend it by the Aristotelian formula, 'equal things to equal persons.'

V

The general result of our enquiry has been, I apprehend, to show that each of these competing ideals of Justice is only reasonable in the sense in which it becomes equivalent to the other. We saw that Equality was only reasonable in a sense which implied, not equality in the possession or enjoyment of any concrete good, but only equality of consideration—equality in the degree of importance which is attached to each man's

individual Well-being in the distribution of ultimate good so far as such distribution is capable of being effected by human action. And even so, the formula 'every one to count for one and nobody for more than one' requires to be interpreted as meaning 'every one's good to be considered as of equal value with *the like good* of every other individual'. It is not really individuals considered simply as individuals but individuals considered as capable of a certain kind of good that are intrinsically valuable, and entitled to consideration equal in so far as their capacities are equal, unequal in proportion as their capacities are unequal. And when we turned to the other ideal of recompense or reward, we found it to be childishly unreasonable in so far as it meant that every individual should be assigned sugar-plums in proportion to his moral or other 'merit,' but entirely reasonable in so far as it meant that superior capacity constitutes a superior title not only to the conditions for the realization of such capacities, but to those other good things of human life which are necessary to complete that ideal of a desirable life of which virtuous activity is not the whole. These two ideals come to the same thing; both prescribe equality of treatment when capacities are equal, treatment in proportion to the intrinsic worth of the capacity when they are unequal. And the worth of a capacity is really, as we have pointed out, the worth of that kind of good life which the capacity enables the individual to realize. As the formula of reward according to merit seems too hopelessly charged with misleading suggestions to be adopted by a rational system of Ethics, I prefer to retain the Benthamite maxim with the explanation that it is each man's good that is as good as the like good of another, not the individual abstracted from all those capacities the possession of which can give him worth or entitle him to 'consideration' at the hands of his fellows [1].

[1] If we grant that superior capacity should receive the superior consideration, the question may still be raised whether, if and in so far as the persons enjoying superior culture are not and cannot always be those intrinsically most fit to receive it, the existence of a favoured class enjoying such culture can be justified. To a large extent this state of things actually exists: to a certain extent it must probably always be so if the higher culture is to subsist at all. I should reply: I have already urged that the existence of this class *is* socially useful, if 'useful' be only understood in

The superior man's good is worth more than the inferior man's (whatever the nature of his superiority)—how much more must be decided by our judgement of value in each particular case of moral choice. The superior man's good has more value than that of the inferior man, simply because it is a greater good.

VI

From this point of view it might almost appear as if we had succeeded in reducing our two maxims of Justice and Benevolence to one and the same all-embracing precept—that of promoting a maximum of good on the whole.

But our difficulties are not yet at an end. It may still be asked, 'What are we to do when we can only satisfy equal claims to good by diminishing the total amount of good to be enjoyed?' Even the abstract and theoretical solution of this problem is, it must be confessed, a matter of extreme difficulty, to say nothing of practical applications. It may, indeed, be maintained that our theory of equal consideration for good of equal worth will still prove equal to the strain. We have already seen how frequently inequality in actual distribution is demanded by the

a non-hedonistic sense. If it could be shown that its existence could not be justified on social grounds, I should still maintain that a society with a cultivated class would be better than a society without one; the inequality would be justified by the superior value of higher good. But it would still remain a duty to *aim* at making the favoured class consist of the persons most capable of the higher life. So far as that cannot be done, it is still better that the higher life should be led by some, even though that life be not so good a thing as it might be if the opportunity of it were reserved for the most capable persons. Von Hartmann's tirades against the 'social-eudaemonistic Moral principle' and the associated ideal of equality (he entirely fails to distinguish between the different possible senses of the word) are to a large extent answered by his own convincing, if exaggerated, demonstrations of the necessity for social inequality (*Das sittliche Bewusstsein*, pp. 503–508, &c.). When he seems positively to contend for the maximizing of inequality, his argument turns partly upon an over-estimate of the necessity for competition, so that the fittest (in an intellectual and ethical sense) may be selected, while he forgets that the higher stages of animal and human evolution have been attended by a progressive *diminution* of waste; and partly upon his pessimistic exaggeration of the incompatibility between progressive culture and happiness whether in the individual or the society.

maxim of equal consideration itself. But are we to assume that this must always be so—that, no matter how great an inequality is required to effect it, the promotion of maximum good on the whole will always be right, because the hardship to the individual or the minority sacrificed will always be no more than is warranted, on the principle of equal consideration, either by the inferior numbers of the minority or by their inferior capacities for good[1]? It is clear that if the sacrifice of good on the whole to fairness of distribution were carried beyond a certain point, we should be violating the principle that one man's good is of the same value as the like good of another. If we were to impose great hardships upon a whole community in order that the life or health of one man might be spared, that would be to treat that man's life as more valuable than the life of many. But what if a very slight increase of good on the whole could be secured by a very gross inequality in its distribution? Ought we never to sacrifice something in the total amount of good that there may be a greater fairness—a greater approach to equality for equal capacities—in its enjoyment? I think it is clear that, if a very small sacrifice of good on the whole could secure much greater equality in its distribution, we should say that the sacrifice ought to be made. Whether the structure of human society is such that we could ever produce more good on the whole by distributing unequally, is a problem which we hardly possess the data for determining[2]. But we may perhaps be tolerably certain that a rigid carrying out of the principle that no sacrifice of individuals is to be condemned which is balanced by an equivalent increase of good on the

[1] It is clear that in this last case Justice, in the sense which we have given to it, might prescribe the sacrifice of the majority to a minority, but it will simplify the discussion to assume that the superior numbers and the superior capacity are on the same side.

[2] That a fairer distribution of material wealth would be worth purchasing at the cost of diminished production on the whole, few would dispute. But then it cannot be assumed that the additional production would really be additional *good*. In all probability it would not be so. A lesser amount more fairly distributed would produce greater good on the whole. Here a law of diminishing returns comes into play. £100 added to a rich man's income would not perceptibly add to his enjoyment; divided among ten poor men it might produce a great deal.

whole would lead to a sacrifice of unfortunate minorities—the weak in mind or body, the sick, the halt, the maimed—such as common humanity would condemn [1]. At all events we are not entitled to exclude the speculative possibility of such a state of things, and consequently must not assume an invariable harmony between the ultimate results of our two maxims of Benevolence and of Justice or Equity.

How then are we to co-ordinate the two principles of action? One way of doing so is tempting on account of its simplicity. We might say that equality of distribution is itself a good, and so that it will always be right to promote the greatest good on the whole, after giving due weight to the good involved in equality. The question how much gain in fairness of distribution is to be treated as equivalent in worth to a given amount of other goods will then be simply an ordinary case of comparison of values—a very difficult one in practice, but offering no particular difficulty in theory. But objection may be taken to regarding as 'a good' so abstract a thing as a distribution—something which cannot be regarded as the good of any one of the persons affected nor of all of them collectively, since we have admitted the possibility of a diminution of good on the whole in consequence of such an ideal distribution. Such an objection is no doubt a reasonable one: and it might lead us to give up the attempt to reduce our axiom of Benevolence and our axiom of Equity to a single principle. From a practical point of view it might be enough to say that there are simply two sides of a single ideal of life, and the practical Reason must decide in each case which is more important—Justice or good on the whole. But it seems hardly consistent with the very meaning of 'good' to suggest that it may sometimes be a duty to promote something which is not the good. If we are to attempt to defend these maxims of Justice and Benevolence as valid and self-consistent judgements of the practical Reason, it is a matter of life and death to our position to find either a common denominator, in terms of which both principles could be expressed,

[1] As already suggested (above, p. 163), this consequence might be avoided by assigning a sufficiently high value to sympathetic feelings—a solution which is practically much the same as we arrive at below.

or at least some third principle which should govern us in deciding between their respective claims—in deciding when to sacrifice quantity of good in favour of just distribution, and when to sacrifice justice of distribution in order that there may be more good to distribute. The difficulty may, I think, be escaped by remembering that, according to the view of the end here adopted, it is not only the pleasure or other non-moral good which is promoted by right actions which constitutes the supreme ethical end, but the qualities of character which these acts express. And not only Benevolence but Justice also is part of the ideal life for the society at large and for each individual member of it. And this inclusion of Justice or Equity in our ideal of life sets limits to the extent to which we can allow individuals or societies to promote a maximum of other good at the expense of great inequality in its enjoyment, just as the inclusion of culture among our ends or elements in *the* end sets limits to the amount and kind of pleasure which we can regard as elements in the good. In insisting therefore that an individual or a society ought sometimes (if such a collision should in practice occur) to sacrifice something in amount of good in order to effect its more just distribution, we are not enjoining any one to subordinate the pursuit of good to something which is not a good at all, but simply insisting on one particular case of that subordination of lower goods to higher which every non-hedonistic system of Ethics must admit at every turn. An abstract 'distribution' cannot be a good, but a disposition and a will to distribute justly may be. A society which for the sake of increasing the pleasure or even the culture of some should be content to condemn a minority of its members to extreme hardships would be thinking too much of its pleasure or its culture and too little of its own Justice. If an individual or a minority, on the other hand, were to demand of the majority that this sacrifice should be carried beyond a certain point, it would be thinking too much of its own claims or (to put it in another way) too much of the encouragement of sympathy and mercy to individuals and too little, it may be, of culture or pleasure in society at large. There is a proper degree of subordination of the individual to society, and a subordination which goes beyond that degree. Both of these

principles of conduct may be expressed as ultimately qualities of human character. When a Quaker or a disciple of Tolstoi refuses to kill a man in a just war because that particular man has committed no crime, he is, according to common opinion, wrong because his ideal attaches too much importance to kindness and goodwill for individuals and too little to the common interests of human society at large and that system of rights by which those interests are promoted. Were a society to refuse to do anything for its submerged tenth or twentieth—to do more for them than their strict numerical proportion might demand—in the interest of its own comfort or even of its own culture, that would be attributing too much importance to comfort and culture and too little to the moral quality (whether you call it Justice or Benevolence) which revolts against allowing individuals to suffer the worst horrors of poverty because they are only a minority. What is the exact degree of importance which should be attached to each of these elements of character—solicitude for individual interests and the care for other forms of social good—is, just like any other question as to the relative value of goods, a problem upon which the practical Reason must pronounce in each particular case, and which does not admit of being solved by any exact or universal formula.

The principle which I have been contending for may be briefly expressed thus. The claims of social good are paramount. It is always a duty to promote maximum social good. Both the rule of Justice and the rule of Benevolence ultimately turn on the value of certain kinds of consciousness. Benevolence asserts the value of good. Justice asserts the value of persons. There is no real and final collision between these aspects of the ideal end, for good is ultimately the good of definite individuals. Justice and Benevolence are thus the correlatives of one another. Good has no worth—it has indeed no existence—apart from persons: persons have no value apart from the good which they are capable of enjoying. But it is true that the good of some may have ultimately to be secured at the cost of a diminished enjoyment of good by the whole society. And Justice does prescribe that we should aim at bestowing equal good on equal capacity. Some sacrifice of individuals to the whole is, indeed, prescribed

by the just claims of the majority. Too great a sacrifice of the individuals does present itself to us as unjust even when it might be prescribed by the principle of maximum good. But when this is the case, it is because consideration for the claims of individuals no less than consideration for the whole forms part of that ideal character which is itself the highest element in the good. When Justice itself is given its due place as part of the true good for society and each individual in it, we may say that it is always a duty to promote the greatest good on the whole.

VII

To apply these highly abstract considerations to practice—to enquire to what conclusions they point in the region of social and political conduct—forms no part of my present undertaking. Every political question is, of course, in the last resort an ethical question. But in so far as the duty of the individual turns upon questions as to the ultimately best form of human society or the means of promoting it by social and political action, the discussion passes into the region of social and political rather than of purely ethical Philosophy. The considerations on which I have insisted will, I trust, have shown the impossibility of any individual immediately effecting by his own unassisted efforts an ideally just distribution, the impossibility even for society of realizing it immediately, the unreasonableness even under any conceivable social order of basing the distribution of good merely upon a principle of ideal Justice to each particular individual without reference to that other side or aspect of Morality which enjoins the promotion of the greatest good on the whole. The enjoyment by each individual of as much good as he is entitled to by his capacities (relatively to the capacities of others) must be looked upon therefore as an ideal—a far-off ideal, to which only more or less distant approaches are possible even in the region of self-consistent Utopias. This would, perhaps, be admitted by many zealous advocates of Equality. But I hope I have further indicated the necessity of not making any actual equality of good, even as a distant ideal, our primary object, but rather general Well-being; and I trust I have shown

further that such a course is imperatively required by ideal Justice itself, since the only equality that is capable of immediate realization is equality of consideration, and to produce equality of distribution at the cost of lowering the average amount distributed would be a violation of that one essential equality. If in the course of my argument I have incidentally replied to some of the arguments by which the extremer kinds of Socialism[1] are sometimes advocated, I trust it has become no less evident that any attempt to justify the *status quo*—the taking of interest, the system of inheritance, the fixing of wages and prices by competition and the like—as an even approximate realization of Justice is a still more indefensible thesis. This present state of affairs may be for the moment—with the exception of this or that immediately possible reform—a less violation of justice than any other *possible* system; and so long the maintenance of the existing order of society *minus* the possible reforms will be demanded by Justice itself: Justice can never require us to make matters worse. None the less, the discrepancy between the present distribution of wealth and any that could *a priori* be justified in the interests of general Well-being emphasizes the fact that one large element of private duty which Justice prescribes for the individual must be the striving after a more socially beneficial system. But we shall be prepared to find that even in the remote future no system of distribution that is at once possible and socially expedient will realize the dream of any other equality than equality of consideration.

The ideal Justice which I have attempted to adumbrate is not capable of immediate political realization. It would open up a large question were I to ask how far it is capable of immediate application in the domain of private Ethics—I mean, how far it is possible for each individual to act upon principles of ideal Justice, in so far as it rests with himself to determine how much

[1] In strictness Socialism does not necessarily imply an *equal* distribution of material things, but the more thoroughgoing advocates of the doctrine that the State should be the sole owner of the instruments of production and the sole employer of labour often adopt that programme only as a means to an ultimate equality of wealth or enjoyment.

of that portion of the world's wealth over which he has legal control he shall allocate to himself, and how much to the service of other individuals or of the community. I cannot attempt now to discuss that question adequately; I am at present concerned with a purely theoretical and not with a practical question. And yet it is desirable sometimes, even in the interests of pure theory, to point out some of the practical bearings of speculative ethical controversies. And therefore I do not hesitate to suggest the urgent need of bringing our highest ideal of Justice to bear upon the details of private life and especially of personal expenditure. It is obvious that it is not possible for most people in an un-ideal state to act in accordance with what would be the right in an ideal state of things. For each man to allot to himself no more of the good things of this life than might be his under a régime of ideal Justice would demand a heroism which such equality would not involve under such a régime, and at times would be injurious to others, and even to society at large. In some directions it would be inexpedient for any one; in many directions it would be inexpedient for every one. Such an attempt would not really conduce to Justice itself; for under existing conditions the professional man, compelled to live like an artisan, would suffer much more than the artisan suffers. For the present we must to some extent acquiesce in the idea of a standard of comfort for each class. The maintenance of such a standard is up to a certain point required by the different demands for efficiency in different callings, in part by the necessity for keeping up that stimulus to superior industry, skill, inventiveness and the like, which we have seen to be essential to social Well-being even where it would otherwise be difficult to reconcile with the requirements of ideal Justice. But where different standards of comfort exist, some measure of conformity to the customs of one's class or position, in such matters as eating and drinking, housing, service, dress, entertainment, amusement and the like, is demanded under penalty of hardship and isolation such as would not be endured by any one, were such matters arranged for us on principles of ideal Justice in a socialistic State. If the system is good on the whole, it cannot always be wrong for the individual to fall in with it: the individual

cannot be required to act in a way which, if generally imitated, would be socially injurious, and the attempt to do away with all expenditure which exceeds what would be possible if wealth were equally distributed would, we have some reason to believe, be socially injurious. Still, it is a clear duty on the part of every one who is convinced that the share of good things enjoyed by the few is disproportionate and intrinsically unjust, to seek to limit his own personal expenditure wherever he can do so without a less efficient discharge of his own social function or other social inconvenience. It would be a step to the creation of a new morality upon such subjects, if we were to cultivate the habit of compelling ourselves to give some kind of reason for our indulgence in any kind of expenditure over and above what would be allotted under a régime of pure equality, whether the justification be found in our particular social function, in the conditions necessary for the exercise of our own particular capacities, natural or acquired, in the superior intellectual or aesthetic value of our pleasures and their indirect social effects, in the necessity of inequality and competition as a stimulus to industry, or only in the necessities and conventionalities of the existing social code, which sometimes render intrinsically unnecessary expenditure the smaller of two evils. If it is probable that the principle of a class standard of comfort will always be inevitable and even in a measure socially useful, we must at least recognize the duty of trying to reduce the present enormous differences between the highest and the lowest standard; and, in the case of those whose class standard is high, of aiming for themselves at the lower rather than the higher limit allowed by that standard, except when some higher good to the consumer himself or some social advantage to others would seem to result from the higher expenditure. It may safely be said that the scale of expenditure prevalent among the richest classes is as little conducive to their highest Well-being as to that of the poorest. If under existing conditions the existence of such expenditure is necessary as a stimulus to the *entrepreneur* or the captain of industry, the fact that it should be necessary is a moral evil for the gradual removal of which it is a duty to strive.

A word must be added to bring these general considerations to bear upon the duty of the individual. The duty of Justice in the individual seems to consist in (1) seeking to bring about by political or other means such an improvement in political and social organization as will realize a more complete equality of consideration than is possible in his existing environment; (2) observing this principle of equal consideration in his relations to his fellow men in so far as is possible under existing conditions; (3) respecting all those political and social arrangements, however much at variance with the ultimate ideal, as are enforced by the existing social order, in so far as that order cannot immediately be improved upon by the individual's voluntary action under existing conditions. It is to the duties of Justice and Benevolence taken together that we should ultimately refer the duty of Loyalty to existing social institutions and particularly to the State; the duty of Honesty, which means respect for the existing laws of property so long as they are not capable of immediate improvement by the individual's own action; and the observance of such other rules, whether enforced by law or otherwise, as are found conducive to social Well-being. In a sense, as I have endeavoured to show, all duties are social, since it is never either right or possible to aim at one's own individual good without regard to the good of others. In a sense no duty is purely social in the sense of the Hedonist, since every duty is more or less liable to modification by the consideration that the true good alike for individuals and for societies is something more than pleasure. In the highest sense Benevolence and Justice (if we include in it Prudence or due regard for self) may be so understood as to include all other virtues: true Justice and true Benevolence represent two sides, each of them unintelligible or, at least, certain to be misunderstood if taken apart from the other—of the single all-inclusive duty of promoting the different kinds of good in proportion to their true intrinsic worth or place as elements in the good. It is because this good does include various elements that Virtue in general is divided into the many virtues with which we have already attempted to deal in the preceding chapter. To insist on the fact that all virtues can be reduced to the single virtue of

just Benevolence is desirable because it emphasizes the truth that there is a single all-inclusive ideal of life in reference to which alone separate 'virtues' become intelligible; over-emphasis in ethical teaching upon the 'unity of Virtue' and neglect of particular 'virtues' practically tends either to a vagueness which may degenerate into Antinomianism, or (if the consequential test of virtuous conduct in detail is much insisted upon) to a too hedonistic interpretation of the ultimate good. Insistence upon Benevolence as the sole ultimate duty can only be safe when it is duly interpreted as a Benevolence which is inclusive of Justice, and which has due regard to all those non-hedonistic elements in the good which are promoted by and consist of the special virtues to which particular names have been assigned. In all that has been said about social duty, it is assumed that the individual's own good is to be given due consideration, and, when this good is non-hedonistically interpreted, it will include many forms of 'self-regarding' duty besides Prudence in the sense of due regard for one's own 'interest' in the hedonistic sense.

VIII

Before leaving the subject of Justice some addition seems to be called for to what has been said about the institution of property. If the principles which have been laid down in this chapter are right, the duty of respecting that institution is simply a particular part of the duty of obeying the State—a duty which is itself a part of the more general obligation to respect the conditions of social Well-being. A more detailed discussion of property seems to belong rather to political than to ethical Philosophy in its narrower sense. It may be well, however, briefly to point out in what sense we can, and in what sense we cannot, regard the duty of respecting property as one of essential and permanent obligation. It is a duty to respect the existing laws of property because some system of distributing material wealth or its enjoyment is essential to social Well-being, and the existing system is the best that has hitherto been devised; at all events individual acts of rebellion against it retard rather than accelerate the working out of

a better system. The same regard for social Well-being and the best possible distribution of it which prescribes obedience to the existing law sanctions any improvement of it that may be possible, the moment that it does become possible. Property is the creation of Law, and what Law has created, Law may modify in the future as it has modified it in the past. *A priori* it might seem that some form of collective ownership in the instruments of production would be more likely to harmonize the conflicting claims of different individuals than any possible system of private Capitalism. This is not the place to enquire, how far the enormous practical difficulties of bringing about such a system without introducing other and worse evils are difficulties inherent in the nature of things, and how far they are difficulties which it may ultimately be found possible to overcome. Whether ownership should be individual or collective is simply a detailed question of the means to social Well-being. But it may be pointed out that there is one limit which is set to the attempt to substitute collective for individual ownership by the nature of the end itself. The end, as we have seen, is, or rather includes, a certain type of character or (more properly) a certain kind of life led by men of a certain character. The end is the perfection of individual lives. The perfect life for the individual is not an isolated or solitary life: it is eminently social, a life whose good consists in activities which minister to the good of others as well as to his own. But still it must be a life in which there is room for the individual to act, to pursue his own ideals, to choose the means to them, to direct his own activities, to reap the fruit of those activities, to experience the consequences both of success and of failure. There can be no true human good life which does not include all this, and it is difficult to see how any system of distribution can minister to this end which does not allow some appropriation of material wealth more individual and permanent than any which is consistent with a thorough-going Collectivism—Collectivism of the kind which aims at securing an absolute equality of distribution or, at least, some close approximation to it. Wealth cannot be made subservient to a truly moral life without some measure of liberty in its use, and consequently

even in its abuse. The right use of wealth cannot be secured by the most magnificent system of public maintenance. Just as children brought up in large public institutions are often more deficient in character, initiative, and intelligence than children educated in very unsatisfactory homes, so an institution-bred population could not realize a high ideal of human life. Men and women might be lodged in the most luxurious of workhouses, fed sumptuously every day at the public expense, driven daily from the most moderate of State-regulated tasks to the most refined of State-regulated amusements. They might be dosed periodically with the most carefully considered doses of State-regulated education, culture, and even religion. But all these things could not avail to produce an ideal human life. Character cannot be developed when the will is passive, nor intelligence when there is little demand or opportunity for its exercise. There must be room for initiation, for selection, for choosing what to do or not to do, for laying out plans not from day to day but for a long future. And this there cannot be without not merely some appropriation of material wealth for immediate needs but some power of disposing of it with a view to the deliberately chosen purposes of a man's whole life, and to the good of others in whom he is interested. This line of thought has been well developed by Prof. Bosanquet. 'Is it not enough, we may be asked, to know that one can have what is necessary and reasonable? No; that makes one a child. A man must know what he can count on, and judge what to do with it. It is a question of initiation, plan, design, not of a more or less in enjoyment [1].'

It is possible that all that Prof. Bosanquet contends for, and all that can reasonably be contended for as a matter of principle, might be combined with a much greater extension of collective ownership than he himself would be disposed to contemplate. Socialism does not object to private property, but only to private capital. It is only upon the questionable assumption that private property necessarily carries with it the institutions of unlimited private bequest and private Capitalism that Prof.

[1] Essay on 'The Principle of Private Property,' in *Aspects of the Social Problem* (1895), p. 313.

Bosanquet's demand for a sphere in which individual choice and individual responsibility shall have free play can be considered fatal to the more moderate socialistic schemes. Socialism allows the possession of private property in the only sense in which nine-tenths of the community now possess private property. Private property may perhaps come hereafter to mean something seriously different from what it means now; but Prof. Bosanquet's general principle ought to be fully accepted. It is the supreme condition of a truly moral system of property-distribution that it shall be the one most favourable to the cultivation and development of the highest individual characters. If in some form the institution of private property must be regarded as permanently necessary for the development of individual personality, we need not dwell upon the extent to which that institution as it now exists—the system of unlimited competition, unlimited accumulation, unlimited inheritance—will have to be modified before it can be regarded as the system best calculated to develope in the individual a moral ideal which includes in itself Benevolence and Justice.

IX

The whole of my treatment of Justice in this chapter will (like the Benthamite formulae which I have accepted in a modified shape) be met in some quarters by the objection that it is inconsistent with an adequate recognition of the 'organic character of human society.' Here again it would lead me too far into the political region to discuss the truth and meaning of the undoubtably important but much-abused formula that 'society is an organism.' What is meant by the objection is, I take it, practically[1] something of this kind. It has hitherto been assumed that man's duty consists in contributing to a certain general welfare of society, as though he could allot a certain amount of good to himself and other lots of good to other individuals: whereas, as a matter of fact, we cannot distinguish between the good that a man does to himself and

[1] I do not here discuss the metaphysical or logical question how far the abstract category of Organism is applicable to Society, and confine myself to the ethical side or application of the doctrine.

the good that he bestows on another. True human good consists largely in activities which are at once my good and the good of others[1]. And further a man's duty does not consist in a general contribution to a lump of good: it consists in performing some special function marked out for him by his position in the social organism. Neither a man's contribution to the general good, nor the quantity or quality of it which he enjoys, can be exactly the same as every other man's. No improved social arrangements can secure that the tailor shall enjoy exactly the same good as the scholar. The tailor's function, his activity, and therefore a large part of his true good, consists in doing his tailor's work and finding his own good in it, and the scholar's good consists in leading the scholar's life. You cannot 'distribute' to the tailor the scholar's good, which consists mainly in leading the scholar's life. All social progress, all culture, all civilization involves a constantly increasing 'differentiation.' It is only in an extremely simple state of society that the lives of different people can exactly resemble one another, a society in which only very simple needs are felt, and in which each family or household supplies practically all its own needs. And the increasing differentiation necessarily carries with it not only unlikeness but inequality. The different kinds of life are not, and cannot conceivably be, all equally pleasant, or equally valuable from any other point of view than that of the goodwill which may be exhibited in all of them. The differentiation involves exceptional sacrifices for some, exceptional advantages and enjoyment for others. To aim at the equalization of individual Well-being is therefore inconsistent with the welfare of society at large. And that is not all. The true good of every individual, even apart from his occupation or sphere of social service, is necessarily unlike that of every other: every individual is more or less unlike every other and therefore to some extent wants a different kind of life to satisfy him. And these differences become greater, the higher the state of social development, the higher the capacities, and the higher the development of the individual concerned. A dead level of individual Well-being could only be secured by cutting

[1] Qualifications of this principle are discussed below, Bk. II. chap. iii.

down all individual eminences, and that would mean the extinction of all the higher kinds of Well-being altogether: for these are essentially dependent upon the multiplication and differentiation of wants on the one hand, and of individual capacities on the other. The formula of equal consideration, even in the modified form which we have given to it, is therefore, it may be urged, no less objectionable from the point of view of a true individualism than it is from that of the 'social organism[1].'

There can be no doubt as to the extreme importance of these considerations from a practical point of view. They do constitute an enormous objection and difficulty in the way of all collectivist schemes. They are absolutely fatal to any crude attempt at an immediate realization of the collectivist ideal. An immediate Collectivism would certainly mean the lowering not merely of material conditions but of modes and ideals of life to the level which the many are immediately capable of appreciating. And they will always be fatal to schemes of Socialism which aim at an absolutely dead level of material conditions, at an extinction of all differences in education, in culture, in modes of life, in quantity and quality of work. The Socialism which proposes to impose six hours' manual work a day on every one—on Physicians and Scholars and inventors for instance—would mean a return to Barbarism. But these consequences are, I should contend, sufficiently guarded against by the interpreta-

[1] This principle has been urged with much force, but with some exaggeration, by Simmel (*Einleitung* I, p. 360, *et passim*), though he is not one of those who insist much on the idea of a social organism. On this basis a running fire is kept up against Socialism all through his powerful writings. By way of criticism I will only add to what I have said in the text the following remarks: (1) The only sort of Socialism which he seems to contemplate is one which aims at absolute equality of conditions; (2) his ultimate good is not either pleasure or Well-being, but a 'maximum of energy,' which is best secured by maximum ups and downs of pleasure and pain: the struggle for existence becomes with him not a means but an end (see further below, Bk. II. chap. iii, *ad fin.*); and for this a larger measure of 'differentiation' is naturally required than is wanted on a more commonplace interpretation of ideal Well-being. That a high development of individual capacity requires some liberty, and that all liberty involves *some* inequality and some pain, is no doubt true: but Simmel's view seems to involve a positive apotheosis of Unrest.

tion which I have placed upon the Benthamite formula. What I have contended for is simply equality of consideration; and an absolute equality of conditions would involve a diminution of general welfare which would be inconsistent with the good of all members of the society or the great majority of them, and would therefore be condemned by the formula itself. Moreover, I have admitted the superior rights of the superior kind of Well-being, and therefore of the superior man who is capable of enjoying it. I have only insisted that even the claims of the superior man must be estimated with due regard to the claims, be they small or great, of other people. If any one likes to regard the highest development of a few superior beings as an object compared with which immense masses, so to speak, of commonplace virtue and happiness may be treated as a negligible quantity, such a view would to my mind misrepresent the actual verdict of the healthy moral consciousness, but it would be quite consistent with the formula of equal consideration if we assume that he was right in his judgements of comparative value[1]. But if (to return to the social side of the objection) by the allegation that my view is inconsistent with the organic character of human society it is implied that human society has a good which is distinct from the good of the individual persons composing it, if this 'good' or 'development' of society is made a sort of fetish to which whole hecatombs of individual lives are to be ruthlessly sacrificed, I can only reply that such a view seems to me a pure superstition—a widely prevalent superstition which is responsible for much of the stupidity and mismanagement with which the world's affairs are often conducted. With the Philosopher the mistake may sometimes be an honest blunder: translated into practical politics this vague talk about the 'interests of the social organism' generally carries with it the assumption that society is to be organized in such a way as to secure a maximum advantage to the limited class which is actually in possession of the lion's share of good things, and that those who threaten

[1] Simmel has suggested that in some cases a man might justifiably treat himself as a person of this importance, like Nietzsche's *Übermensch*. So anti-social an attitude would, in my view, involve the sacrifice of the higher to the lower, even in the individual's own life.

to disturb this arrangement are to be shot down forthwith. In practice it means *Beati possidentes*: the existing Prussian constitution in Church and State is the final and highest development of 'the Idea.'

There is no good that is not the good of some individual or individuals, though unquestionably that good is the good of social beings interested in the welfare of their fellows, and occupying definite positions in the social system. It is a clear deliverance of the reflective moral consciousness that we should endeavour to secure as much as possible of this good life for as many individuals as possible. It is true no doubt that, when we come to ask in detail *how* the good life is to be enjoyed by as many individuals as possible, we must remember all those characteristics of human society which are emphasized by the formula 'society is an organism'—that one man's good is not *necessarily* another's loss, that it is in discharging his social function that the individual attains his truest good, that social functions vary, that a man's good must be relative to his function, that increasing differentiation in many respects is a note and condition of social progress, that the life of society is a continuous growth and can only be gradually modified, that some liberty is a condition of all higher Well-being and that all liberty carries inequality with it, and finally that the maxim represents an ideal which it is a duty to aim at but which can never be fully realized. These considerations will be further developed in the chapter on 'Vocation.' But all this does not seem to require any modification of our doctrine that Justice does consist in the apportionment to each individual of his due share of good, in so far as that good can be secured or modified by human agency. Questions of Justice cannot be thought out without assuming that good is a thing which we can distribute. This assumption involves, like all speculative theories, a good deal of abstraction. But it in no way implies that we really suppose that human 'Well-being' or 'good' is a tangible lump of plum-cake which we can serve out in slices according to a tariff prescribed by the intuitive moral consciousness. It merely asserts that the social Organism is not an end in itself but a means to the good of individual human beings, each of

whom should be treated (as far as possible) according to his own individual worth [1].

To complete our treatment of Justice one more question must be faced—the question of Punishment. We have seen in what sense it is a duty for the individual, both in his private relations and as a member of a community, acting in concert with others, to aim at rewarding Virtue. It remains for us to inquire 'In what sense, and on what grounds, is it a duty to punish Vice?'

NOTE ON RENOUVIER'S IDEA OF JUSTICE.

An attempt has been made by M. Renouvier in his *Science de la morale* [2]—one of the most serious and earnest efforts to grapple with the real problems of Ethics which has been made in recent times—to resolve all Virtue or at least all moral obligation (in the strict sense) into Justice. Taking his stand on the Kantian principle that Justice represents the conditions upon which the liberty of one (i.e. his opportunities of obtaining his true end) is compatible with the like liberty of all, he attempts to deduce therefrom all the 'strict' duties which man owes to man. But it is admitted that such duties can only be fully discharged in an ideal state of society (the *état de paix*). They postulate a state of things in which every one else is equally willing to perform *his* duty towards the agent and towards all others. Where others ignore their obligations, the right of defence justifies encroachments upon the liberty of others (including all State coercion) which go beyond strict Justice, while scope is afforded for a Benevolence equally going beyond those limits; but such Benevolence can only be considered a duty in so far as it springs out of one's duty to oneself—the duty of developing oneself morally and cultivating one's generous emotions. Hence a code of Ethics suitable to the existing *état de guerre* is not (like the duties of Justice) capable of strict scientific formulation. I admit that it is possible to give a tolerably accurate analysis of our actual moral ideas on this basis. M. Renouvier's work seems to me quite the ablest attempt to develope the Kantian formalism into something like a reasonable and self-consistent system. But it seems to be open to the following objections; (1) The duty of respecting others' liberty is not an ultimate and independent duty, but is derivable from the value of others' good; a certain kind of liberty is an

[1] 'The whole developed apparatus of constitution and government would have absolutely no end or meaning if their activities did not ultimately result in the good of individuals' (Sigwart, *Vorfragen der Ethik*, p. 17). It might seem unnecessary to quote so obvious a remark, except as a proof that sanity in talking about the social organism is not quite unknown among philosophers of acknowledged distinction.

[2] Published in 1869.

essential condition of Well-being, but it is not Well-being itself. To aim at liberty rather than Well-being seems to me irrational. (2) This being so, it is arbitrary to set the limits which Renouvier sets to the assistance which one man owes to another—to say that he must abstain from interference, but is under no obligation to help others to realize their true good. (3) We can form so inadequate a picture of a perfect humanity and a morally perfect society that it is hardly worth while to attempt to draw out in detail the duties which in such a state man would owe to man : any value which such an attempt might possibly have would seem to be rather for Law than for Morality. (4) When the author comes to the critical question of property, he is obliged to admit that the *a priori* rights of property (substantially Locke's divine right of the first grabber) which he claims as necessary to the liberty of each are *in the nature of things* (and not only in consequence of other men's injustice) unfairly restrictive of the liberty of others, so that his *a priori* Morality is not even fit for an ideal society or consistent with itself. (5) Hence it is practically much more convenient to reduce both the Justice appropriate to the *état de paix* and the restrictions imposed by the *état de guerre* to a general duty of promoting *as far as possible under actual circumstances* the good of each in proportion to its intrinsic value. This is, I believe at bottom, what all this elaborate apparatus comes to, when its arbitrary and dogmatic accidents have been removed. For a discussion of the idea of 'works of supererogation,' necessitated in a peculiarly harsh and rigorous form by M. Renouvier's system, the reader may be referred to the chapter on 'Vocation' in our second Book.

CHAPTER IX

PUNISHMENT AND FORGIVENESS

I

THERE was a time when the notion that blood demands blood was held so firmly and so crudely that little distinction was made between intentional and unintentional acts of homicide. Ancient law abounds in traces of this inveterate instinct of primitive humanity. We see the legislator of the Pentateuch endeavouring to limit its operation by the institution of cities of refuge, whose walls protected the unintentional homicide against further pursuit by the avenger of blood. We find the same inability to distinguish between voluntary and involuntary homicide in the curious notions of the Canon Law (still, perhaps, theoretically in force among us) about the 'irregularity' contracted by consecrated persons and consecrated places through the most unwitting bloodshed, and not contracted by the most atrocious violence involving no physical effusion of blood. We see the same curious but once useful superstition in the old law of Deodand, which required the forfeiture of the inanimate object or the irrational animal which had, in the most accidental way, been the instrument of man's death. Thus even the horse from which a fatal fall had been sustained, or the boat from which a man had drowned himself, were made the subjects of this peculiar application of retributive justice. At the present day the cruder forms of this old-world cry of blood for blood are no longer heard; but what is, perhaps, after all only a more refined form of the same fundamental notion lingers in the theory which makes the primary object of punishment to be retribution. A man has done wrong, therefore for that reason and for no other, it is said, let him be punished. Punishment, we are told, is an end in itself,—not a means to any end beyond

itself. Punishment looks to the past, not to the future. The guilt of the offence must be, in some mysterious way, wiped out by the suffering of the offender; and that obliteration or cancelling of the guilt-stained record, be it noticed, is conceived of as quite independent of any effect to be produced upon the sufferer by his bodily or mental pain. For, the moment we insist upon the effect produced upon the sufferer's soul by his punishment, the retributive theory is deserted for the reformatory or the deterrent. Here is the famous passage of Kant:—

'Juridical punishment can never be administered merely as a means for promoting another good, either with regard to the criminal himself or to civil society, but must in all cases be imposed only because the individual on whom it is inflicted *has committed a crime*. . . . The penal law is a Categorical Imperative; and woe to him who creeps through the serpent-windings of Utilitarianism to discover some advantage that may discharge him from the justice of punishment, or even from the due measure of it[1]!' He goes on to defend the *lex talionis* as the only just principle for the allotment of penalty to crime, and to make the famous declaration that, 'if a civil society resolved to dissolve itself with the consent of all its members' [so that punishment would be no longer required for deterrent purposes], '. . . the last murderer lying in the prison ought to be executed before the resolution was carried out[2].'

There we have the retributive theory propounded by the greatest of modern philosophers; and it is still defended by philosophers and philosophic jurists in Germany, England, and America[3]. For most modern men, whether or not they have consciously abandoned the theory, this view exercises but little influence over their ideas of *human* justice, though it is to be feared that it still casts a black shadow over popular conceptions of the punishment in store for sin in another world.

[1] Kant's *Philosophy of Law*, E. T. by Hastie, 1887, p. 195.

[2] Ib. p. 198.

[3] Hegel has usually been understood to maintain the retributive theory. Dr. McTaggart (Hegel's 'Theory of Punishment' in *International Journal of Ethics*, vol. VI, July, 1896) has endeavoured to show that this is a misunderstanding. Dr. McTaggart's own view, whether really 'Hegelian' or not, is in the main that for which I contend.

It is difficult to argue against a theory whose truth or falsehood must be decided for each of us by an appeal to his own moral consciousness,—by the answer which he gives to the simple question whether he does or does not in his best moments feel this mysterious demand that moral guilt should be atoned by physical pain. That the sight of wrong-doing—particularly when it takes the form of cruelty—does inspire a sentiment of indignant resentment in healthy minds, and that it is right and reasonable that in all legal ways that sentiment should be gratified, no sensible person will deny. But that is only because experience shows that the infliction of pain upon offenders is one of the most effectual ways—and in some cases the only effectual way—of producing amendment. The question is whether, *apart* from its effects, there would be any moral propriety in the mere infliction of pain for pain's sake. A wrong has been done—say, a crime of brutal violence; by that act a double evil has been introduced into the world. There has been so much physical pain for the victim, and so much moral evil has polluted the offender's soul. Is the case made any better by the addition of a third evil,—the pain of the punished offender, which *ex hypothesi* is to do him no moral good whatever? If, as enlightened philanthropists sometimes seem to imagine, the direct effect of all punishment that really is punishment were to inspire the offender and others with a passionate desire to repeat the offence,—if in our prisons a liberal diet, genial society, free communication with the outside world, artistic cells, abundant leisure and varied amusement were found in practice to be more deterrent and more reformatory than solitude and plank bed, skilly and the narrow exercising yard, how many disciples of Kant would be Kantian enough to forbid the institution of a code of graduated rewards for our present system of pain-giving punishments?

Perhaps the simplest way of satisfying ourselves that it is impossible to reconcile the retributive theory of punishment, either with the actual practice of our courts or with any practicable system of judicial administration, will be to notice the modification which is presented by Mr. Bradley. Mr. Bradley seems to be so much struck with the obvious disproportion

between the moral and the legal aspect of various offences, that he actually gives up the doctrine that the *amount* of punishment should correspond with the amount of the offence, while still maintaining that punishment in general is justified only by the past sin, not by the future advantage.

'We pay the penalty, because we owe it, and for no other reason; and if punishment is inflicted for any other reason whatever, than because it is merited by wrong, it is a gross immorality, a crying injustice, an abominable crime, and not what it pretends to be. We may have regard for whatever considerations we please—our own convenience, the good of society, the benefit of the offender; we are fools, and worse, if we fail to do so. Having once the right to punish, we may modify the punishment according to the useful and the pleasant, but these are external to the matter; they can not give us a right to punish, and nothing can do that but criminal desert. . . . Yes, in spite of sophistry, and in the face of sentimentalism, with well-nigh the whole body of our self-styled enlightenment against them, our people believe to this day that *punishment is inflicted for the sake of punishment*,' &c.[1]

[1] *Ethical Studies*, 1876, pp. 25, 26. In a note which appeared in the *International Journal of Ethics* ('Some Remarks on Punishment,' vol. IV, Ap., 1894, p. 284), Mr. Bradley protests against being supposed to hold that punishment is inflicted for the sake of pain. Alluding to an article in the same Journal, which is substantially reproduced in the present chapter, Mr. Bradley remarks: 'Mr. Rashdall appears to me to misunderstand the view which he attacks. He takes me to hold an "intuitive theory of punishment," by which (so far as I can judge) he means a view based on some isolated abstraction. I find this strange, and what is perhaps stranger is that he treats me as teaching that punishment consists in the infliction of pain for pain's sake. At least I am unable otherwise to interpret his language. Now, I certainly said that punishment is the suppression of guilt, and so of the guilty person. But I pointed out that negation is not a good, except in so far as it belongs to and is the other side of positive moral assertion (*Ethical Studies*, p. 25). Pain, of course, usually does go with the negative side of punishment, just as some pleasure, I presume, attends usually the positive side. Pain is, in brief, an accident of retribution, but certainly I never made it more, and I am not aware that I made it even an inseparable accident. If a criminal defying the law is shot through the brain, are we, if there is no pain, to hold that there is no retribution? My critic seems, if I may say so, to hold an "intuitive theory" of my views.'

Upon this explanation I should like to make the following remarks:—

(1) I admit that for 'pain' I ought to have said 'or other evil, loss of

Now, in the first place, is this consistent? If punishment is 'modified' for utilitarian reasons, does not that mean that it is inflicted partly for retribution and partly for some other reason? If so, we do not pay the penalty because we owe it, *and for no other reason.* And, secondly, is it logical? If sin by itself confers the right and imposes the duty of punishment, there must be a right to inflict either a definite amount of punishment or an infinite amount. If the latter, it is obvious that the State will always have the right to inflict any quantity of punishment it pleases upon any of its citizens at any time, since all have sinned and incurred thereby unlimited liability to

something good being treated as an evil.' If it were not thought an evil to be shot through the brain, the shooting would certainly not be a punishment. What retribution would be in which there was no such evil, I am wholly at a loss to understand.

(2) I am quite willing to admit that Mr. Bradley recognizes a positive side as well as a negative side to punishment, but I have entirely failed to discover what this positive side is. Mr. Bradley goes on to say that punishment is 'the reaction of a moral organism, and this organism has a particular concrete character.' I don't deny that in punishment the organism reacts against the criminal; and very often the criminal reacts against the organism. But what I want to know is 'why ought it so to react?' If it has a purpose in doing so, let that purpose be expressed. If the purpose be to produce any effect upon society, it seems to be totally misleading to say that 'punishment is inflicted for the sake of punishment' or for 'retribution' and so on. If that purpose be anything else besides the production of good effects on conscious beings, it seems to me wholly immoral and irrational. I cannot look upon an abstraction like 'moral assertion' as an end-in-itself.

(3) In spite of Mr. Bradley's explanations, I cannot admit that the views he maintains in the above-mentioned Article are reconcilable with the chapter in *Ethical Studies.* Mr. Bradley formerly maintained that it was immoral to punish except for retribution: now he defends 'social Surgery' (i. e. wholesale Infanticide) for the reduction of population. Any infliction of pain, loss, or death is justified, it appears, for an adequate social end provided we do not call it punishment. Surely it is a mere sophism to suppose that the 'gross immorality,' the 'crying injustice,' the 'abominable crime' of unmerited punishment can be escaped by the mere trick of calling it 'social Surgery' instead of 'punishment.' It is fair to add that Mr. Bradley adds: 'I should have little to correct in the old statement of my view except a certain number of one-sided and exaggerated expressions.' To me, if I may say so with profound respect for his later writings, the chapter in *Ethical Studies* to which he alludes seems to consist in little else but one-sided and exaggerated expressions.

punishment. 'Use every man after his desert, and who should 'scape whipping?' Such a contention would render the whole theory nugatory. If, on the other hand, wrong-doing confers a right to inflict a merely limited amount of punishment, Mr. Bradley is open to the following objections:—

(1) How can this amount be fixed? How can moral guilt be expressed in terms of physical pain? To any one who believes that punishment is justified by its effects, the right or just amount of punishment is that which will best serve the ends for which punishment exists—i. e. deterrence and reformation. But how, apart from its end, can the amount of punishment due to each offence be fixed? I find in my own mind no intuitions on the subject, and believe that if we were all to sit down and attempt to write out lists of crimes, with the number of lashes of the cat or months of imprisonment which they intrinsically merit, we should find the task an extremely difficult one, and should arrive at very discordant results. At all events, such a task would be hopelessly out of harmony with the actual practice of the most enlightened tribunals. It is obvious that drunkenness in a 'gentleman' will often be, morally speaking, as culpable as burglary in an hereditary criminal. But it is not so much the practical as the theoretical impossibility of the task that I wish to emphasize. The idea of expressing moral guilt in the terms of cat or birch-rod, gallows or pillory, hard labour or penal servitude, seems to be essentially and intrinsically unmeaning. There is absolutely no commensurability between the two things.

(2) Assuming this difficulty removed, it is clear that when the proper amount of punishment has been inflicted, the right to punish has been exhausted. If any further punishment is inflicted for utilitarian reasons, it will be simply, on Mr. Bradley's premisses, so much unjustifiable cruelty. If forty stripes save one is the proper punishment for any offence, the fortieth will be simply a common assault, no matter whether it is inflicted by the private individual or by the public executioner.

(3) The only way of escape open to Mr. Bradley would be to contend that though the State may not for utilitarian reasons increase, it may for utilitarian reasons reduce the ideally just

punishment. The position is on the face of it a somewhat arbitrary one, and it is open to this objection: it involves the admission that in all cases wrong-doing confers a right, but does not impose a duty of punishment. Can it be moral that society, if it might, without failure in duty, remit punishment, should punish just because it pleases so to do? This would be to admit that whether we shall punish or not is to be determined by mere caprice. So, if you say that it is a duty to punish, except where utilitarian considerations demand that less than the ideal amount should be inflicted, you practically admit that whether any punishment should be inflicted at all, and how much, must be determined by teleological considerations. The theory of an intuitive command to punish will have reduced itself to the somewhat barren assertion that you have no right to punish except where there has been wrong-doing. This is a proposition which it is hard to dispute, since, as a general rule, no public purpose is served by hanging the wrong man. There are, however, cases where it must be admitted that suffering may lawfully be inflicted on innocent persons—e. g. where a barony or a hundred is made to pay compensation to persons injured in a riot, or where a savage village that has sheltered a murderer is burnt by a European man-of-war. There are, too, exceptional crises in which it is necessary, in the interests of society, to be less exacting in the matter of evidence than a civilized state ought to be in quiet times.

We are here, however, straying into difficult and disputable questions of details, and it is best to be content with simply pointing out that, when we have applied to the theory the qualifications which are demanded by the obvious facts, it is reduced to very modest limits. It amounts simply to the assertion that punishment should be inflicted only on the guilty; it admits that in its infliction the legislator should be governed by utilitarian considerations, that is, by the end which punishment actually serves.

From the point of view which we have hitherto been taking, the retributive theory will appear to many a mere survival of bygone modes of thought. Yet, as is usually the case with theories which exhibit so much persistence as the one before us,

the retributive theory of punishment contains a good deal of truth at the bottom of it,—deeper truth perhaps than the Benthamite view, which has taken its place in popular thought. There are, I think, three elements of truth which the retributive view of punishment recognizes, and which the ordinary utilitarian view often ignores.

(1) Firstly, it possesses psychological or historical truth. It is correct as an explanation of the origin of punishment. That punishment originates in the instinct of vengeance is a commonplace of Anthropology. Criminal law was in its origin a substitute for private vengeance. The fact is illustrated by the Jewish law of homicide, by the Saxon system of Wergilt, and by the Roman law which punished the thief caught red-handed twice as severely as the thief convicted afterwards by evidence taken in cold blood. The theory was that the owner would naturally be twice as angry in the first case as in the second, though, of course, the injury done either to himself or the community would be precisely the same. And this connexion between punishment and vengeance is not simply a matter of history. It is still (as Sir Henry Maine has insisted [1]) one of the purposes of punishment to serve as an outlet, a kind of safety-valve, for the indignation of the community. All laws ultimately depend for their enforcement upon the public sentiment in their favour; hence the legislator cannot afford to take no account of popular sentiment in their administration. There are many features of the modern criminal law which can only be defended on account of the desirability of keeping up a certain proportion between the measure of public indignation and the measure of legal penalty—for instance, the distinction made between accomplished crimes and attempts at crimes which have failed through causes independent of the offender's volition. Public opinion will sanction capital punishment when the blood of a brother man seems to cry for vengeance from the ground; it would not tolerate an execution for an attempted murder which has failed through a pistol missing fire. It may be doubted whether this irrational mode of estimating punishment by the actual, and not by the intended, effects of an act is not sometimes

[1] *Ancient Law*, 4th ed., 1870, p. 389.

carried unnecessarily far, as when, for instance, a Magistrate remands a prisoner to see how his victim's wounds progress. Whence it would seem to follow that, since a total abstainer's wounds heal sooner than a drunkard's, a man is to be punished more severely for stabbing a drunkard than for stabbing a total abstainer. In ways like this, deference to popular sentiment may be carried too far, but there can be no doubt of the soundness of the principle that the criminal law, while it seeks to guide, must not go too far ahead of popular sentiment, nor yet (as American lynch law occasionally reminds us) lag too far behind it.

(2) The second half-truth held in solution by the retributive theory is the fact that punishment is reformatory as well as merely deterrent. Very often, indeed, it will be found on examination that those who most loudly clamour for reformatory punishments do not really believe in the reformatory effect of punishment at all. Punishment is necessarily painful (positively or negatively), or it ceases to be punishment. Those people who denounce any particular punishment on the ground that it is painful, really mean that you ought to reform criminals *instead of* punishing them. Now, of course, it is the duty of the State to endeavour to reform criminals *as well as* to punish them. But when a man is induced to abstain from crime by the possibility of a better life being brought home to him through the ministrations of a prison Chaplain [1], through education, through a book from the prison library, or the efforts of a Discharged Prisoners' Aid Society, he is not reformed *by punishment* at all. No doubt there are reformatory agencies much more powerful than punishment; and without the co-operation of such agencies it is rarely that punishment makes the criminal into a better man. But it is none the less true that punishment does help to make men better, and not simply to induce them to abstain from punishable acts for fear of the consequences. At first sight this may seem to be a paradox; but it seems so only when we forget that every man has in him a better self, as well as a lower self. And if the lower self

[1] Or (according to a system which is, I believe, adopted in some American prisons) by the lectures of the Moral Philosopher attached to the prison.

is kept down by the terror of punishment, higher motives are able to assert themselves. Fear of punishment protects a man against himself. If in the punishment of criminals we have practically to think much more of its effects upon others than of its effects upon the men themselves, it is otherwise in education. Fear of punishment by itself will seldom turn an idle boy into a diligent one; but there are few boys who could be trusted to work their best at all times, if in their weaker moments they were not kept to their duty by a modicum of fear; and there are few of us, perhaps, whose conduct would not fall still further behind our own ideal than it actually does, if our better selves were not sometimes reinforced by fear of punishment,—at least in the form of social disapprobation or loss of reputation. And in the case of actual crime, that conviction of the external strength of the Moral Law which punishment brings with it is usually at least the *condition* of moral improvement; though that conviction will not make a man morally better, unless the external judgement is ratified and confirmed by the appellate tribunal of his own Conscience. Nevertheless, this external respect for the Moral Law is the first step to the recognition of its internal, its intrinsic authority.

Plausible as it looks to deny *a priori* that mere pain can produce moral effects, the extravagance of the contention becomes evident when it is seen that it involves the assertion that no external conditions have any effect whatever upon character. It is matter of common experience that men's characters are powerfully affected by misfortune, bereavement, poverty, disgrace. Adversity is not, of course, uniformly and necessarily productive of moral improvement. But no one will deny that under certain circumstances, and with men of certain temperaments, great moral changes are often produced by calamity of one kind or another. In some cases the effect is direct and immediate; in other cases the effect is produced indirectly through the awakening of religious emotion. In either case, of course, all that the misfortune does is to create conditions of mind favourable to the action of higher motives and considerations, or to remove conditions unfavourable to their action. Punishment, on its reformatory side, may be said to be an artificial creation of

conditions favourable to moral improvement. The artificial creation of such conditions has, of course, this advantage over ordinary misfortune, that it is seen to be the direct consequence of the wrong-doing, which is not necessarily the case with other alterations of circumstances.

In view of these considerations, we may, perhaps, go one step further and maintain that even in cases where punishment will not have a reformatory effect, where the tendencies to evil are too strong to be kept in check by fear, even then punishment may be, in a sense, for the moral good of the offender. Wickedness humbled and subdued, though it be only by external force, is a healthier moral condition than wickedness successful and triumphant. That is the extremest point to which we can go with the advocates of the vindictive theory. This is, I suppose, the truth which underlies the hackneyed expressions about avenging the insult offered to the Moral Law, vindicating the Moral Law, asserting its majesty, and so on. We recognize that punishment may sometimes be right, in the interests of the offender himself, even when it fails to deter. The pleasures of successful wickedness may be treated as bad pleasures which are of less than no value, and even pleasures not in themselves connected with the successful wickedness may, when enjoyed by a bad man, be regarded as of very small intrinsic value. But still, it is always a certain effect on consciousness and character that constitutes its justification, not merely the satisfaction of an impersonal and irrational law [1].

[1] I should be prepared to recognize a larger amount of truth in the *a priori* view of punishment, if the idea of punishment were to be confined simply to the withholding of good things, to what theologians have called a *poena damni*. Whether it would be right to make the bad happy if the absence of happiness would have no effect on their badness—not even that of making them feel that goodness is stronger than evil—is almost too abstract a question to admit of an answer; but that in a sense it is true that goodness and happiness ought to go together has already been admitted in the last chapter. I could accept Mr. Moore's view that 'the infliction of pain on a person whose state of mind is bad may, if the pain be not too intense, create a state of things that is better *on the whole* than if the evil state of mind had existed unpunished,' with the reservation 'whether such a state of things can ever constitute a *positive* good, is another question' (*Principia Ethica*, p. 214). Only I should submit that the ground of our

(3) A word will suffice to indicate the third and the highest truth which the vindictive theory of punishment caricatures. It is the truth—the great Aristotelian truth—that the State has a spiritual end.

We all know that experience sets tolerably strict limits to the extent to which it is desirable that the State should interfere with personal liberty and private life in the pursuit of moral and spiritual ends. There are many grave moral offences which the State may reasonably refuse to punish for quite other reasons than indifference to moral Well-being. The offence may be incapable of exact definition. It might require for its detection a police-force which would be a public burden, or involve an inquisitorial procedure, or give rise to blackmailing and false accusation to an extent which would constitute a greater evil than the offence itself. The experience of the ecclesiastical courts, which continued in full operation in this country down to 1642 [1], or of the clerical government prevalent in Rome under the Papacy, would afford plenty of illustrations of the evils incident to such attempts to extend police supervision to the details of private life. Very often, no doubt, the difficulty arises largely from the fact that the attempt puts too great a strain upon the Conscience of the community. Many offences may be, on the whole, condemned by public opinion which are not condemned with sufficient earnestness to secure the enforcement of the criminal law against them. With all these admissions, it must still be contended that the State is perfectly entitled to repress immorality. If an act is not inconsistent with the *true* Well-being either of the individual or of society, it is not immoral; and, even if it were admitted that the State should not interfere with conduct affecting only the Well-being of the individual, it is impossible that any act which affects the Well-

approval is not the mere fact 'that the combined existence of two evils may yet constitute a less evil than would be constituted by the existence of either singly' (ib., p. 215), but the tendency of the pain to make the state of mind less opposed to our ideal of what it ought to be.

[1] Their jurisdiction over laymen was of course occasionally exercised to a much later date. Since the penances imposed by the ecclesiastical courts were (and theoretically *are*) enforceable by imprisonment, no distinction in principle could be drawn between their action and that of the State.

being of an individual should be without consequences for others also. The distinction between crimes and sins can be found only in considerations of social utility. A crime is simply a sin which it is expedient to repress by penal enactment[1]. Every civilized state punishes some offences which cannot be said to be injurious to the 'public good,' unless moral Well-being is considered to be part of the public good.

It must be remembered that it is not merely by actual and direct intimidation that the State can promote Morality. The criminal law has an important work to do in giving expression to the moral sense of the community. Popular ideas as to the moral gravity of many offences depend largely upon the punishment which is awarded to them by the criminal courts. There are probably thousands who have hardly any distinct ideas about sin except those which are inculcated at Assizes and Petty Sessions. It is no uncommon experience for a clergyman to be told by a dying man—notorious, it may be, for fornication or drunkenness or hard selfishness—that he has nothing to reproach himself with, his Conscience is quite clear, he has never done anything wrong that he knows of, he has no reason to be afraid to meet his God, and so on. Then upon enquiry it turns out that what the man really means is that he has done nothing for which he could have been sent to prison.

There are many offences which the State can do little to check by the directly deterrent efforts of punishment, but which it can do much to prevent by simply making them punishable. Since a few persons with good coats have actually been sent to prison for bribery at elections, the respectable public has really begun to suspect that there may be something wrong in the practice. A very little reflection upon the different estimates which are formed of these forms of immorality or of dishonesty for which people go to prison, and of those for which they do not go to prison, will show at once the enormous importance of the criminal law in promoting the moral education of the public mind. While, therefore, there are some kinds of

[1] In practice, of course, this term is usually reserved for the graver kinds of offences against the law. We do not talk about the *crime* of having one's chimney on fire.

wrong-doing which, either from their essential natures or from collateral considerations, cannot be wisely dealt with by the criminal law, we may expect that with the necessary moralization of a community, the sphere of criminal law ought gradually to extend. In the growing disposition to enact and enforce laws against gambling, to assist, if not to enforce, temperance by Act of Parliament, and to protect by the criminal law the chastity of young girls, we may recognize an instalment of moral progress. The doctrine that you cannot make men moral by Act of Parliament is about as true as the doctrine that you cannot make men abstain from crime by Act of Parliament. In spite of all the efforts of the Legislature, the practice of stealing has not been entirely stamped out. The fact that no legislation has succeeded in producing a perfectly moral community does not show that the State cannot do much to make a community more moral than it would otherwise be.

II

It will be urged by some that the enforcement of Morality tends to deprive that Morality of the freedom which is one of its essential conditions. The ideal life that we want to promote is not a society in which certain things are done, but a state of society in which certain things are done from the right motives —by persons 'in a certain state of mind' and 'doing them for their own sake' (*πῶς ἔχοντες* and *αὐτῶν ἕνεκα τῶν πραττομένων*), as Aristotle would put it. The aim of society, and of the State, is to promote the growth of characters of a certain type. Too great social pressure, still more decidedly too much State coercion, is destructive of the spontaneity, the individuality, the variety without which the highest types of character will not grow. We do not wish to turn people out exactly in the same mould. That is so partly because the mould which any existing society would be apt to impose is not an ideally perfect one, and we want to have room for further growth in our ideal: partly because (within certain limits) there is room for considerable variety not merely in the type of external conduct, but in actual character. Different types of character are mutually complementary and combine to form an ideal society. But even the character which we do

want to be universal—that devotion to the general good, that compliance with the primary conditions of social Well-being, which must be an element in all intrinsically valuable characters —would lose much of its value if enforced beyond a certain point. The failure of Monasticism has been largely due to its attempt to enforce too much. Not only does the prescribed routine of life destroy individuality and originality, but even the Morality which is actually secured ceases to be the result of moral effort. A life in which there are no temptations—or rather in which the place of natural temptations is taken by artificial ones manufactured by unnatural conditions of life[1]—and no room for spontaneous effort is not conducive to moral growth. There is much in the history of monastic institutions which goes to show that such a minute regulation of life by unbending rule encourages a certain childishness of character, to say nothing of graver anti-social tendencies. That is so even if the hold which the rule has on the man depends entirely (as it does in modern times) on his voluntary consent[2]. Still graver would be the deterioration of character under a system wherein all life should be regulated by police discipline. Character is formed by acts of choice; consequently character cannot be developed when there is no occasion for the individual to choose at all.

These considerations have been much insisted upon by the late Professor T. H. Green, and (as it seems to me with considerable exaggeration) by Prof. Bosanquet. To say that 'the promotion of morality by force . . . is an absolute self-contradiction'[3] is to take a very superficial view of the matter. Such a dictum assumes that, when an act is enforced, it must be done merely because it is enforced. It cannot be doubted that dis-

[1] With all its beauties, it is impossible to read many pages of the *Imitatio Christi* without feeling that the writer is incessantly occupied with temptations of this kind.

[2] This, of course, was not the case in the Middle Ages, when the secular arm returned the 'apostate' monk to his convent; and even now the penniless condition of the renegade monk often has the same effect.

[3] Bosanquet, *Philosophical Theory of the State*, 1899, p. 192. The statement is, indeed, modified by the preceding sentence: 'Whatever acts are enforced are, so far as the force operates, withdrawn from the higher life.'

honesty would become rampant in a country wherein stealing should be unpunished. And yet it would be the veriest cynicism to assert that the majority of our fellow countrymen keep their hands out of other people's pockets *only* because they are afraid of going to prison if they don't. The existence of punishment for an offence may create a state of feeling in which the act is looked upon as wrong in itself. The individual who begins with abstaining from fear of punishment may end by regarding the act with hearty and spontaneous dislike: and the individual born into a society already permeated with this feeling may simply not be aware that the existence of punishment for the offence has anything to do with his own dislike of it. There may be no great objection to the formula that the State ought rather to create the conditions of Morality than to enforce it, but it is impossible to draw a sharp line of distinction between the two things. One of the conditions for the growth of a 'free Morality' may be the existence of laws which have comparatively rarely to be enforced. There is hardly any kind of legislation in favour of Morality advocated by any sensible person which might not be brought within the formula understood in a liberal sense: understood strictly, it would exclude kinds of legislation to which few sensible persons object. To seek to enforce all Morality would indeed be fatal to the higher growth of character: but it is ridiculous to contend that no room would be left for the spontaneous exercise of Virtue because certain elementary requirements of Morality are enforced by law. Liberty to get drunk is surely no more essential to character than liberty to steal.

When all these admissions have been made, it may still be maintained that there is no fundamental distinction in principle between the offences which the State will do well to punish and those which it will do well to let alone. There is no civilized State which does not in practice punish many offences for no other reason than that there is a strong moral feeling against them. If there is to be moral progress in the future, we may expect the area of conduct dealt with by the criminal law to widen. And it involves no cynicism to predict that there will be little progress unless it does. Bad conduct which people feel

really strongly about they will always want to repress. And the punishment of the grosser kinds of misconduct, so far from diminishing people's sensitiveness about the unpunished misconduct, tends greatly to increase it. Conscience is aroused by the reflection that much misconduct which goes unpunished differs only in degree from that which conducts men to prison. When we wish to make people feel strongly the wrongness of idleness or certain kinds of 'company-promoting,' we point out that it is really the same thing as stealing. When we attain to a social condition in which it shall be possible to punish the worst kinds of company-promoting, perhaps even the worst kinds of idleness, we shall perhaps feel more sensitive about that excessive pursuit of self-interest or amusement which at present counts almost as a virtue.

III

There is another aspect of the retributive theory of Punishment on which I should like briefly to insist. If the theory of the moral criterion which has been defended in previous chapters be a true one, it must be true in every case and without any exception. The idea that punishment can be an end in itself apart from the effects which it is to produce is wholly inconsistent with that principle of teleological Morality which (in every other connexion) would be accepted by most of those who, in servile adherence to an unintelligent philosophical tradition, still maintain the retributive theory of punishment[1]. The

[1] The influence of mere tradition in this matter is curiously illustrated in the case of Prof. Bosanquet, who still considers it necessary to speak of punishment as retributive, while the explanation of punishment which he gives, though to my mind evasive and unsatisfactory, has really nothing 'retributive' about it except the name. He sums up: 'In short, then, compulsion through punishment and the fear of it, though primarily acting on the lower self, does tend, where the conditions of true punishment exist (i. e. the reaction of a system of rights violated by one who shares in it), to a recognition of the end by the person punished, and may so far be regarded as his own will, implied in the maintenance of a system to which he is a party, returning upon himself in the form of pain. And this is the theory of punishment as retributive' (*The Philosophical Theory of the State*, p. 227). Verily one would not have thought so if Prof. Bosanquet had not told us so! The fact is that Prof. Bosanquet so completely rejects the retributive theory

essence of the moral judgement is, as is scarcely denied by the modern adherents of the Kantian tradition, a judgement of value. Nothing can be right except as a means to something which has value in itself; nothing surely can be an end in itself except some state of a conscious being, and to say that a state of conscious being is an end in itself is to say that it is good. The essence of punishment is the endurance of pain or some other evil. In spite of the high authorities that may be quoted for the contrary view, I venture, under the aegis of Plato and the many Christian thinkers who have found his ideas on this subject in essential harmony with the Christian temper, to maintain that an evil cannot under any circumstances become a good except relatively—either positively, as a means to some morally good state of consciousness, or medicinally (ἐν φαρμάκου εἴδει), by way of remedy against some worse evil. If it be urged that punishment is a good as a means to the vindication or the assertion or the avenging of the Moral Law, I should venture to ask how an abstract 'vindication' or 'assertion' can be a good—how a mere event or occurrence in nature can be a good except in so far as it is the expression of some spiritual state or a means of producing such a state. Even the Moral Law itself is not an end in itself, but only souls or wills recognizing and regulating their action by the Moral Law. If it be urged that the avenging of the Moral Law is right because it is the expression of the avenger's indignation, that is an intelligible answer; and I have already admitted that the expression and cultivation of indignation is one of the purposes of punishment, though this can be hardly regarded as an ultimate end, but rather a means to a further end—the spiritual good of the man himself and of society at large. But, if punishment is to be justified on account of the good it does to the punisher, we have already gone some way towards the abandon-

of punishment that he really cannot believe that it has actually been held by any one else. And yet I am free to admit that there is much in all this talk about involuntary and impenitent submission to an unreformatory punishment being really the act of the person's own will, which is quite as unintelligible and ethically objectionable as the crudest form of the retributive theory, as implied for instance in the many popular views of the Christian doctrine of Atonement.

ment of the retributory theory in its ordinary form; and further a question arises as to the punisher's right to inflict evil on another in order to secure a good for himself. He—the punisher—is no doubt an end in himself, and is justified in seeking his own good; but what right has he to ignore another's good except as a means to some greater good of his own or of the society in which he lives? It will hardly be seriously contended that such and such a sentence of five years' penal servitude is to be justified because the pain involved is outweighed by the spiritual good which Mr. Justice So-and-so may have secured to himself by passing it. It may be suggested that it is justified because it is the expression of the indignation of society; that the sentence tends to promote in society a reverence for the law which the criminal has broken, or, again, that the punishment produces moral good in the offender. In that case we have frankly abandoned the idea that punishment is an end in itself, and have adopted the view that it is a means to some good in society at large or in the criminal himself. It is true that the word 'deterrence' hardly expresses adequately the fact that the good which punishment confers upon society is in part a spiritual good; that it tends not merely to deter men from committing crime, but to impress upon their minds the idea that crime is wrong—something to be avoided and hated for its own sake. The word 'reformation,' again, hardly does justice to the idea that it is good for the criminal to feel the indignation of society, to feel the external effects of his wrong-doing: that it is a good in itself, one which it might be worth while (if we are to raise so abstract and unpractical a question) to promote, even if we knew that in this particular case it would not lead to that which is the ultimate object of all punishment (so far as the criminal himself is concerned), the alteration of his will, the change of his character. That mere consciousness on the part of the criminal may even be regarded as in its way a good. The endurance of evil cannot be itself a good: the utmost length that we can go is to say that it may be a necessary condition or element in a state of mind which we can recognize as relatively good—as better than that of successful and unresisted evil-doing. Both the 'deterrent theory' and the 'reformatory

theory' are no doubt inadequate to express the whole truth about punishment. There is a side of punishment which might perhaps be best expressed by the term 'educative theory'; or, perhaps, we may simply say that the end of punishment is partly deterrent or utilitarian, and partly *ethical*. Both sides of punishment would be summed up in the assertion that our view of punishment must be a teleological one.

It is sometimes supposed that the utilitarian view of punishment is inconsistent with a proper respect for human personality: it involves, we are told, the treatment of humanity as a means and not as an end. If by the 'utilitarian' theory is meant a view resting upon a hedonistic theory of Ethics, I have nothing to say in its favour; if by 'utilitarian' is meant simply a view which treats punishment as a means to some good, spiritual or otherwise, of some conscious being, I should entirely deny the justice of the criticism. In the first place I should contend that in a sense it is quite right and inevitable that we should treat humanity as a means. When a servant is called upon to black the boots of his master, or a soldier to face death or disease in the service of his country, society is certainly treating humanity as a means: the men do these things not for their own sakes, but for the sake of other people. Kant himself never uttered anything so foolish as the maxim which indiscreet admirers are constantly putting into his mouth, that we should never treat humanity as a means: what he did say was that we should never treat humanity *only* as a means, but always *also* as an end. When a man is punished in the interest of society, he is indeed treated as a means, but his right to be treated as an end is not thereby violated, if his good is treated as of equal importance with the end of other human beings. Social life would not be possible without the constant subordination of the claims of individuals to the like claims of a greater number of individuals; and there may be occasions when in punishing a criminal we have to think more of the good of society generally than of the individual who is punished. No doubt it is a duty to think also of the good of the individual so far as that can be done consistently with justice to other individuals: it is obviously the duty of the State to endeavour to make its punishments as far as

possible reformatory as well as deterrent and educational to others. And how the reformatory view of punishment can be accused of disrespect for human personality, because forsooth it uses a man's animal organism or his lower psychical nature as a means to the good of his higher self, I cannot profess to understand. The retributive view of punishment justifies the infliction of evil upon a living soul, even though it will do neither him nor any one else any good whatever. If it is to do anybody any good, punishment is not inflicted for the sake of retribution. It is the retributive theory which shows a disrespect for human personality by proposing to sacrifice human life and human Well-being to a lifeless fetich styled the Moral Law, which apparently, though unconscious, has a sense of dignity and demands the immolation of victims to avenge its injured *amour propre*.

The real basis and stronghold of the theory which I am investigating is to be found in the undoubted psychological fact that the sense of indignation or resentment at wrong arises naturally and spontaneously in the human mind[1] without any calculation of the personal or social benefits to be derived from gratifying it, and in the profound ethical conviction that for societies—though not always for individuals—it is morally good and healthy that this indignation should be encouraged and expressed. 'Revenge, my friends,' says Carlyle, 'revenge and the natural hatred of scoundrels, and the ineradicable tendency to *revancher* oneself upon them, and pay them what they have merited; this is for evermore intrinsically a correct, and even a divine feeling in the mind of every man.' Such language I could cordially adopt[2], though with the proviso (of which more hereafter) that this feeling is not *so* divine as the love which the best men do succeed in feeling towards the worst, and that it must not be allowed to extinguish that higher feeling. The feeling of indignation is a natural and healthy one,—natural

[1] Psychologically, no doubt, this tendency can in a sense be explained by evolutionary causes.

[2] Except in so far as the word 'revenge' may imply the theory which I am disclaiming. I make this quotation (and the following from Stephen) from a second-hand source, and it seems hardly necessary to spend further time in searching for the passages.

and healthy, we may add, in partial correction of Carlyle, in proportion to its disinterestedness. It is one great purpose of Criminal Law to give expression to this natural indignation against wrong. But Law, in the discharge of its ideal function as Reason without Passion (*νοῦς ἄνευ πάθους*), seeks not merely to express but to regulate, and to regulate with a view to an end. In the words of Sir James Stephen, 'the criminal law regulates, sanctions, and provides a legitimate satisfaction for the passion of revenge; the criminal law stands to the passion of revenge in much the same relation as marriage to the sexual appetite.' And in both cases the ultimate end of the regulation is to be found in a certain ideal of social Well-being.

The error of the upholders of the retributive theory lies, as it seems to me, in mistaking a mere emotion or feeling—an emotion or feeling which in itself is a good and important element in every well-balanced character—for a judgement of the Practical Reason. The Practical Reason may often judge that the emotion should be freely indulged, though at other times it will no less emphatically pronounce that the most elementary requirements of social order demand its partial or entire restraint. The real question is whether it is right to punish simply because we feel inclined to do so, to gratify a natural passion simply because it is there, or whether in this, as in the case of other spontaneous emotions or desires (including the spontaneous impulses of Affection and Benevolence), we ought to regulate passion by Reason, to act for an end, i. e. for the promotion in ourselves and others of whatever we take to be the ideal kind of human life. How the existence of an instinctive resentment against personal wrong, or in good men against wrong to others or moral depravity, can suspend the one all-comprehensive duty of love to all men (including, of course, ourselves) is a question which will, perhaps, offer no difficulties to those philosophical Moralists whose ethical system seems to consist in the mixture of a little truculent Theology borrowed from primitive Judaism with a good deal of pure paganism; but which must, I think, be an embarrassing one to those Retributionists who profess any sympathy with Christian standards of Ethics. The most Christian of mediaeval thinkers (e. g. Dante

or Wycliffe [1]) always maintained that God's punishments were, and man's should be, the expression of love. And this remark suggests another of the difficulties involved in the retributive theory—the difficulty of reconciling it with that side of the moral ideal which is expressed by the word Mercy or Forgiveness.

IV

It is one of the great embarrassments of the retributive theory that it is unable to give any consistent account of the duty of forgiveness and its relations to the duty of punishment. It is seldom that one finds anybody so logical as to maintain that it is always a duty to punish, and never right to forgive, at least till the wrong-doing has been expiated by punishment,—a theory which runs counter to a strongly felt and widely diffused ethical sentiment and which makes the Berenger law or our own First Offenders' Act a piece of immoral legislation. Others seem to have no answer to the difficulty but the admission: 'Here are two inconsistent moral precepts: it is a duty to punish and a duty to forgive: it is impossible to lay down any general principle in the matter: you must do whatever strikes you as best in each case as it arises.' Such an answer may satisfy those who think that Morality consists simply in a collection of isolated impulses, intuitions, or particular judgements, which Reason is incapable of reducing to any consistent or intelligible whole. It will hardly satisfy those who believe that our ethical judgements can be reduced to a system, and that the emergence of apparent ethical antinomies simply shows that we have not yet succeeded in getting to a really fundamental ethical principle. The absence of internal contradiction, though by itself it will supply no adequate content for the Moral Law, we may surely venture (with Kant) to regard as a necessary condition of any law which can really claim to be moral. If the duty of punishment is to rest upon an *a priori* deliverance of the moral consciousness which pronounces that, be the consequences what they may, sin must be punished, it is difficult to see how forgiveness can ever be lawful. If punishment is sometimes right and sometimes wrong, on what principle are we to distinguish between

[1] Dante in the *Purgatorio*: Wycliffe even as regards Hell.

the two classes of cases? That is the problem to which, as it appears to me, no intelligible answer can be given on the retributive theory, but which is not insusceptible of a solution on the basis of the teleological or educative view.

Among the very few moral philosophers who have bestowed any serious attention upon this question of forgiveness is Bishop Butler. By him the duty of forgiveness is resolved into the duty of being 'affected towards the injurious person in the same way in which any good men, uninterested in the case, would be; if they had the same just sense, which we have supposed the injured person to have, of the fault: after which there will yet remain real good-will towards the offender[1].' The duty amounts to this: 'that we should suppress that partial, that false self-love, which is the weakness of our nature; that uneasiness and misery should not be produced, without any good purpose to be served by it: and that we should not be affected towards persons differently from what their nature and character require.' 'Resentment,' he says again, 'is not inconsistent with good-will; for we often see both together in very high degrees; not only in parents towards their children, but in cases of friendship and dependance, where there is no natural relation. These contrary passions, though they may lessen, do not necessarily destroy each other.'

The duty of resentment and the duty of forgiveness are thus reduced to particular applications of the general law of promoting social Well-being. It is our duty to make our own personal resentment subordinate to the general good of society, just as it is a duty to subordinate goodwill towards individuals to the interests of other individuals. In determining whether we should resent or punish an injury (to ourselves or to others) or whether we should forgive, we should simply consider what is best for the interests alike of the individual himself and of society at large, the offender's good and the injured person's interest alike being assigned its due, and no more than its due, importance. The distribution (so to speak) of punishment and of forgiveness will alike be guided by the general principle of Benevolence or goodwill to society in general, the duty of promoting the

[1] Sermon IX.

greatest good on the whole,—guided and controlled by the principle of 'Equity,' in the sense which has already been defined.

It may also be observed incidentally that on this view of the duty of forgiveness as simply a particular manifestation of the general duty of love, we are able to clear up an ambiguity about the meaning of forgiveness which often occasions some difficulty in discussions of this kind. We are often told that forgiveness is not inconsistent with punishment; that we may punish first and forgive afterwards, at least where punishment is a duty arising out of some public function or parental relation and not a mere gratification by legal or extra-legal means of resentment against private wrong. And this is quite true as far as it goes; forgiveness may mean simply the cessation of personal resentment after the exaction of whatever penalty may be demanded by considerations of social Well-being and public duty. But, although in practice the adoption of this attitude may no doubt be easier in the public official than in the private person, it is impossible to draw a hard and fast line between punishment inflicted by the official in the discharge of public duty and the resentment exhibited by the private person, or between the vengeance which takes the form of legal prosecution and that which shows itself in private remonstrance or the refusal of social intercourse. Even legal punishment generally requires private initiation, and the same considerations of social Well-being which require legal punishment in some cases require private resentment in others. It would be to the last degree disastrous to the Well-being of any society whatever if individuals altogether ceased to show anger or to express resentment at personal rudeness or personal liberties or general want of respect for one another's personalities; and from the nature of the case it is usually the injured party who must take the initiative in such resentment, though it may be that the ideal society would save him such a necessity by anticipating the resentment,—an ideal which is already approximately realized in groups of people among whom good breeding is combined with that real good feeling of which good breeding is at its best the expression and at its worst the caricature.

All this shows that we cannot attain to the ideal combination

of punishment with forgiveness by merely laying it down that the magistrate must punish while the man must forgive. Nor, again, can we merely say that the duty of forgiveness begins when the due punishment has been exacted. For what will forgiveness mean in this case? Are we to say that when the formal sentence has been served, it is the duty of the judge or of society generally to treat the criminal with the same cordiality with which we should have received him had he never offended? Undoubtedly society does not give its repentant criminals the fair chance that they may reasonably claim, but to say that we must treat them as though they had never done wrong, or that former convictions should not aggravate the sentence, is surely to demand what is impracticable and pernicious. Nor in private relations can we always be called upon to treat the man who has betrayed our trust—even after repentance or apology—as though he had not betrayed it; nor can a friend, after a quarrel which has revealed in him a character which we had not suspected, ever again be a friend in the same sense or degree as before, even after the most ample repentance or apology. Without, therefore, denying that there is a sense in which forgiveness may be combined with punishment, it is impossible to find for that forgiveness which is compatible with punishment a meaning more definite than this—that punishment should not exclude whatever kind of goodwill can in the circumstances be properly combined with punishment. And that surely is something far too indefinite to satisfy the idea of forgiveness in its full and ordinary sense. It is impossible, in short, to get rid of the popular association of the idea of forgiveness with remission of penalty.

There is, then, a sense in which forgiveness is opposed to punishment. On the view that I have taken it will sometimes be a duty to punish and sometimes to forgive. In determining which we shall do in each particular case, the good man—whether the private individual or the public official, who is after all only the representative of a society of individuals as much bound by the law of love in their corporate as in their individual capacity—will consider which, having regard to all the circumstances of the case, will best serve those social ends to which

punishment and forgiveness alike are means. The ideal punishment would no doubt be one which was the best alike in the interests of society and of the individual. Under our present system of legal punishment it is to be feared that this is an ideal not very often attained. A man has often to be punished in the interest of society whose own Well-being would be best promoted by forgiveness. In such a case we have to balance the interest of society against the interest of the individual, or rather perhaps what the society gains by the moral improvement of the particular individual against what it gains from the deterrent and educative effect of the punishment upon other individuals.

And upon this view of the relation of punishment to forgiveness, there is no absolute antagonism between that sense of forgiveness in which it is opposed to punishment and that sense in which it is compatible with punishment. Just the same considerations which impose the duty of punishment will limit the measure of it; just those same considerations which allow of the total remission of penalty in some cases will allow of some mitigation of it in other cases, and will impose in all cases the duty of showing whatever Benevolence and goodwill towards the offender is compatible with that measure of punishment which social duty demands. Punishment and forgiveness, when they are what they ought to be, being alike the expression of love, the mode and degree of their combination will likewise be only the application of the general precept of love to the circumstances of the particular case.

In the main, then, we may accept Bishop Butler's interpretation of the proper relation between punishment and forgiveness, and yet we cannot but feel that something is missed in this cool and calculating utilitarian analysis. We feel that there must be something more in forgiveness than the mere limitation of vengeance by the demands of public welfare. Seeley, in one of the best chapters of *Ecce Homo*, helps us to supply the deficiency[1]. It is true that in its essence the duty of forgiveness is the duty of laying aside *private* or

[1] *Ecce Homo*, chap. xxii. Von Hartmann has also recognized this justification of forgiveness (*Das sittl. Bewusstsein*, p. 178).

personal resentment,—of resenting the wrong because it is a wrong and not because I am the victim of it. But what Bishop Butler has missed is the fact that vengeance often loses its moral effect just because the avenger of the wrong is its victim, while forgiveness often touches the heart just because the forgiver is the man who suffered by the wrong,—and therefore the man in whom it is hardest to forgive. The wronged man's forgiveness will often have a moral effect, awaken a gratitude and a penitence, which the forgiveness of the disinterested spectator or the remotely interested 'society' would not secure. It is perfectly true, as Butler taught, that forgiveness is only a particular case of love; but he forgot that to a human being who has wronged his fellow, forgiveness is an infinitely more convincing proof of love than punishment can ever be, and may, therefore, touch the heart as punishment will seldom touch it. In the light of this principle nothing that has been said as to the duty of balancing the good effects of forgiveness against the good effects of punishment need be recalled; only, in choosing between them, this peculiar magic of the wronged person's forgiveness must needs be duly remembered.

In conclusion, I may remark that all these considerations are as much applicable to any punishments which Theists may expect as the consequence of sin in another world as to the clumsy attempts at ideal Justice with which we are obliged to be satisfied in the school or the criminal court. Now as in the days of Plato it is a paramount duty of Moral Philosophy to lay down Canons for Theology (*τύπους περὶ θεολογίας*). It need hardly be pointed out that the acceptance of our principles about Punishment will involve a considerable amendment of popular ideas about what we shall still do well to think of as divine punishment, while we recognize the inadequacy of such a metaphor or symbol of God's dealing with human souls. Few Theologians of the present day will be bold enough to follow Abelard in defence of everlasting punishment as being justified by the example and warning which the fate of the wicked supplies to the rest of humanity. And the acceptance of the principles here laid down about forgiveness may involve a no less complete reconstitution of many popular schemes concerning

divine forgiveness and atonement. The idea of vicarious suffering has nothing immoral about it; under the conditions of human life love can hardly be manifested in its highest degree without it. It is otherwise with the idea of vicarious punishment. Even on the retributive view of punishment, the idea of substituted vicarious punishment would never for a moment be defended by a modern Christian except with a view to bolster up an obsolete theological tradition—still less so on the view of punishment adopted in these pages. On the other hand the idea that the nature of God has received its fullest revelation in a self-sacrificing life and death is one against which the Moralist can have nothing to say.